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THE NATION

JUNE 3, 1978 60 cents

On Truth in PUBLISHING

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CALIFORNIA TAX REVOLT Michael Castleman

The FBI Would Shred the Past JOHN ROSENBERG

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Variations CALVIN TRILLIN

In the middle sixties, when those in charge realized rather suddenly that something really ought to be done to eliminate various sorts of discrimination against black people, the airlines got right in step: they started furnishing *Ebony* in the magazine racks of airliners. A few years later, when there was talk of the need for blacks to control their own institutions and businesses, the airlines were again in the vanguard: they added to the magazine racks a magazine called *Black Enterprise*.

As a regular user of the airlines, I can report that the supply of black passengers has not kept up with the supply of *Ebony*s. On a weekday businessmen's flight, I have occasionally watched with some interest as a white passenger—a drummer in electronic software, say, who has finished his reports and is bored with his historical novel about life in a pioneer Montana bawdy-house and is still an hour and a half out of LaGuardia—strolls over to the magazine rack to see what is left to read. What is left at that stage of the flight is a stationery-and-writing kit, a kiddies' magazine with a name like *Puss 'n Boots*, three unthumbed copies of *Ebony*, and a pristine copy of *Black Enterprise*. The drummer gropes in the slots of the magazine rack for a while, presumably thinking that an undersized *Reader's Digest* may have been overlooked. Then, empty-handed, he returns to his seat and tries to find something of interest in Safety Instructions for Your Boeing 727.

Occasionally, when I find myself bored and still an hour and a half out of LaGuardia, I conjure up in my mind the presence across the aisle of a visiting dignitary from Czechoslovakia, accompanied by two official escorts from the State Department. During the flight, the men from State have been filling the Czech in on the progress black Americans have made—using State Department sort of statistics, like how many Chevrolets each black steelworker in Gary is risking repossession on, and how many more black Ph.D.s there are in America than there are reindeer in all of Lapland. The Czech looks impressed, for a Czech. After a while, he stretches, stands, and strolls up the aisle of the plane toward the bathroom—leaving the State Department men with the glow of professional briefers who have just successfully briefed. The bathroom is occupied. Waiting in front of the magazine rack, the Czech idly reaches over to pick up the three remaining magazines. Suddenly, the State Department men realize what is happening. They rush up the aisle to stop him. Too late. He sees. He knows.

Any sign of corporate response to social problems is always welcome, of course. I read the Surgeon General's warning about cigarette smoking every chance I get. My favorite warning appeared on a Winston billboard that loomed over Times Square until recently. I used to offer a small prize—two vials of nicotine and an engraved sterling silver pillbox full of tar—to anyone who could stand with both feet on Broadway and read it unaided by binoculars or telescope. The prize was double for anyone who could do it with smoke in his eyes.

Lately, I have begun to notice a similar disclaimer on

(*Continued on page 653*)

EDITORIALS

The Truth: Do We Care?

A few weeks ago in these pages Leonard C. Lewin asked at the close of his essay on the conglomeration of a cottage industry ("Publishing Goes Multinational," May 13): "Is it beyond belief that most of the books in the rack a few years hence may be chosen for you, like television programs, by Mobil, Exxon and the rest?"

The import of this untheoretical question was vividly illustrated by the response of the chairman of Western Pacific to the news that John Kenneth Galbraith, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Archibald MacLeish, Daniel Schorr and Daniel Yergin had jointly signed a letter protesting Western Pacific's impending takeover of their publisher, Houghton Mifflin, because, "We feel that a publishing company should be an independent entity, responsible for its own direction."

Chairman Howard Newman charged in *The New York Times* that the protesting authors were "put up to" their letter writing in a "party line" plot, presumably organized by their publisher. It was inconceivable to this conglomerateer that the eminent writers were interested in the editorial intelligence applied to their manuscripts and the way in which their books are sent forth into the world. And what's worse, it was conceivable to him that such notoriously independent spirits were taking their marching orders from their commercial benefactor.

Beyond independence, however, is the question of what a publisher is supposed to do with it. In a season of a "nonfiction" book on cloning, "the truth" about Watergate from Bob Haldeman, and other literary disputes familiar to readers of this journal, it therefore seems proper to ask just what, if any, is a publisher's obligation to the truth—the integrity—of what is published?

We asked Richard Kluger, a writer-publisher-editor, to address himself to this much underdiscussed issue and invited an assemblage of publishers, editors and writers to put his ideas to the test of their own experience.

Are publishers obliged to publish false ideas the way the ACLU is obliged to defend the purveyers of false ideas, as in Skokie? And if the obligation is a higher one, just what are its dimensions? Does the difficulty of defining the true (not to mention the good and beautiful) exonerate one from the search for it? We don't of course profess to present the truth on these matters. But we do think Kluger's challenge and the commentaries it has stirred begin an important conversation, one that we assume is foreign to the board rooms Lewin warns us may soon be the forums for deciding such questions.

Keeping Out of It

If one is to try to disentangle the cat's cradle in southern Africa, one must start with the obvious, even the platitudinous: border troubles, irridentism, liberation movements, tribal wars, coups and revolutions will plague that part of the world for many years to come. There is no

Cover drawing: *Quaint Cuts in the Chapbook Style*; Joseph Crawhill (Dover Publications).

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way that these young, poor, fragmented creations of the careless map makers of 19th-century imperialism can settle down to mature and productive lives until they have survived a generation of the stresses that have afflicted them from birth. If that observation is too discouraging, blocking action of all kinds, at least its comprehension in the developed world, both East and West, could limit the messier kinds of intervention of the sort we have seen in Zaire these past few weeks.

During this sad and bloody episode in Shaba Province, Washington has been full of hand-wringing about the "constraints" a President must endure in situations like this. It is almost never asked what the United States could actually have done, had it not been for those limits on Executive intervention. If the 82nd Airborne Division had been dropped on Kolwezi, either to rescue the Europeans beleaguered there or to help President Mobutu regain control of his breakaway province, would our troops have been the third Western military element to become involved, alongside the French and Belgian paratroopers, or would the knowledge that our boys were coming have dissuaded the French and Belgians from their scramble for influence and credit in that former Belgian colony?

The answer is hard to come by, but French Foreign Minister de Guiruingaud loftily declared on the radio the other day that "France is the only country that aids its friends," now that the United States, he said, has withdrawn from active intervention against aggression. The Belgians, who fume at that formulation, having sent troops on a "humanitarian" mission while the French, they claim, were there to get a foothold in the mineral-rich province, now propose an all-African peace force. (If Belgian business interests had not sponsored the Tshombe breakaway of Shaba, then called Katanga, in the 1960s, their dispassionate credentials would be more impressive.) The only smiles to be seen, as Shaba's mines stay closed, are those of the metals speculators; they have watched the depressed price of copper rise by 15 percent and that of cobalt, of which Shaba produces 60 percent of the world's supply, nearly triple.

As the Shaban marauders/invaders melt into the bush or across the border to Zambia or Angola (trained or not by the Cubans, armed or not by the Russians), the signals from Washington are far from clear. Does the President, in some kind of concert with Congress, have the power to take appropriate action, or does he not? Has Congress "tied his hands," as the interventionists claim? Are we afflicted with a "self-imposed paralysis," stemming from revulsion over Vietnam, as Brzezinski has said? Was Ambassador Andrew Young right when he said on television May 21, "I don't agree that the President's hands are tied," or on the next day when he put out a statement (drafted with White House help) that said "I share the President's concern about the many legislative restrictions on foreign assistance"? Finally, is the President really satisfied that "we are doing all we can" within the limits of present laws, which he says we are "honoring rigidly"—or does he want to be able to do more without bothering with Congress?

On May 20, while the outcome in Shaba was still in

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some doubt, the State Department issued an 8-page listing of "Restrictions on Presidential Authority to Provide Assistance to Foreign Nations and Conduct Foreign Operations." At the top of the list was the so-called Clark amendment, named for Iowa's Sen. Dick Clark, the Senate's leading Africanist. It bans any kind of U.S. involvement in the struggles in Angola without specific approval by Congress and it is the result of the CIA's bungling, unauthorized secret operations among the competing factions in Angola in 1975 (along with the agency's lying to Clark about what it was up to, as set forth in John Stockwell's enlightening book about his CIA days, *In Search of Enemies*).

"I favor a lot of these constraints. The War Powers Act suits me fine . . .," said President Carter on May 19. But the sum of all the statements from his National Security bureaucracy since the Shaba operation began amounts to a profound restlessness under the law's constraints and an itch for less inhibited action. This equal and opposite reaction to the national memory of what we did in Indochina was bound to occur, and it is of course stimulated by the adventurism of the curious Russo-Cuban combine at both ends of Africa.

Andrew Young's corrective statement of what he had in mind about all this had the decisive, if not the final, word on current United States policy toward troubled Africa. "There's enough support in this country and in the Congress," said Young, "for us to do openly anything we want to do in Africa."

In other words, no more covert operations by the CIA and no more Presidential wars.

A Job Half Done

For years, perhaps generations, legal scholars, lawmakers and reformers have deplored the 3,000-odd (some of them very odd) laws that make up the federal criminal code. They have wanted to reform and recodify that welter of statutes, to simplify it, to make justice surer and more predictable, and to eliminate its more repressive provisions. At least that was the aim of those reformers who took our constitutional liberties seriously, which does not include those who put together in the Nixon era the dreadful package known as S.1—now substantially revised and known as S.1437/H.R. 6869.

The contest over this legislation has from the start pitted those who think it better than nothing against those who fear it will prove worse than nothing. The present situation of the so-called "Criminal Code Reform" bill is that the Senate has passed S.1437 and the House, in committee, is now considering its version, H.R. 6869.

The House Judiciary Subcommittee on Criminal Justice recently signaled its willingness to kill the S.1437 package by deciding only to recodify existing law and not to use S.1437 as the basis for a markup of the legislation. No substantive changes in the current law will be made except to repeal obsolete statutes. The new agenda also calls for the development of a sentencing package which would increase fairness. The subcommittee will thus consider only piecemeal any reforms of the criminal justice system. It intends to report some kind of bill to the full House committee by July 1.

In *The Nation* of March 25, we published a kind of symposium on this legislation, including a column by Anthony Lewis of *The New York Times,* favoring passage of the reform bill; testimony against it by Prof. Thomas I. Emerson of Yale; a further exchange between the two, and a statement by Sen. Edward Kennedy supporting the bill he has helped to nurse along toward enactment. We have also published in subsequent issues extensive comments by profound students of this matter, all of them enlightening on the question whether the present measure, as it takes shape, properly reconciles the demands of codification with those of reform.

It is now time, and perhaps our duty, to state our own position on the Criminal Code Reform bill as it is emerging from the machinery of the House. And our view is that the bill should not be enacted in the form that the present process will create. We believe, along with the National Committee Against Repressive Legislation, that "passage now of a reform-codification package will effectively stop any further efforts for reform of federal criminal laws" (those words are from a letter to us by Esther Herst, Washington Coordinator of NCARL).

In other words, we believe that the balance between the virtues of recodification and the vices that are left in the proposed criminal code tilts against passage of the measure at this time. Prof. Louis Schwartz of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, who was director of the National Commission on Reform of the Federal Criminal Laws, wrote as follows in a letter we printed in our April 8th issue: "The issue which has fractured the liberal community in this instance is not what civil liberties are desirable—we are virtually unanimous on that—but which are at present achievable. That is a political issue."

Indeed it is a political issue and one of the very nicest sort, in the old meaning of that term. If the old laws stay on the books and no reform goes through, a number of repressive laws will remain in force and the criminal law system will remain untidy, to say the least. But if a new code is enacted after all this legislative labor, and it contains, among other flaws, laws "giving the government new protections against political dissents" (in the words of the ACLU's John Shattuck) and "many provisions that would curtail the rights of citizens to oppose the policies of their government" (as Professor Emerson puts it), what are the *political* chances that these infringements of basic freedoms could later be expunged? The pessimistic answer is the right one—very small.

To be sure, many of the truly vicious provisions of S.1 have been cut out of S.1437. It is no longer a measure that would, in Emerson's words, "enable the government to crush all political opposition and insulate itself from criticism or influence by the citizens of the country." But, as now being written, it greatly expands the area of "complicity crimes," moves toward an Official Secrets Act, is inadequate in its treatment of eavesdropping and wiretapping, restricts public demonstrations,

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contains troubling new provisions on parole and sentencing and makes labor unions more vulnerable to hostile action by employers. It would generally expand the criminal law and widen the scope of federal law-enforcement powers, thus magnifying the role of the FBI, which is hardly reassuring.

All these provisions are in the bill in its present stage, even before it gets to the House floor and this is an election year, when the law-and-order forces will be in full cry. The bill's proponents sense a crest in the wave of reform that means now or never for a change in the criminal code. We doubt that, wearisome as the reform process has been and will continue to be. Time and deliberation have cut out some truly dangerous provisions from the original proposals. There is no reason why that purifying process cannot continue to work in the future, aided by additional pressures from the constituency of liberty. The bill as now drawn should not pass.

VARIATIONS *(Continued from page 650)*

ads for the New York City Off-Track Betting operation. The original argument for off-track betting, as I remember it, was that, given the eternal truth that a certain number of people are going to take a flier on the horses no matter how many laws are passed against it, a government-controlled betting system would keep the bookie money out of the hands of wicked mobsters—and take a cut of the action for the citizenry at the same time. In my innocence, I assumed that the government would simply make off-track betting available for those who wanted it—in the discreet way a state liquor store in Vermont or Alabama makes liquor available. As it turns out, OTB spends thousands of dollars on subway and billboard advertisements to persuade citizens that betting on the horses will transform them into some combination of Frank Sinatra and Walt Frazier. These days, about the only way a responsible New York breadwinner can escape OTB ads imploring him to blow the rent money on the ponies is to go to the track. Recently, though, the Off-Track Betting Corporation added to its huge subway ads a small notation in the left-hand corner that says, "For information on the most effective treatment for the compulsive gambler, contact the National Council on Compulsive Gambling, 142 E. 29."

In a way, signs of corporate response to social problems are made even more interesting by the realization that the sign may, in fact, be the response. A couple of weeks ago, on an airline flight chock-full of people like drummers in electronic software, I noticed for the first time among the magazine-rack leftovers a magazine devoted to women in business. "Well, that takes care of that," I thought. "Next case." I now realize what the coal industry lobbyists who considered federal health-and-safety regulations unnecessary must have had in mind instead: a small, well-designed sign at the entrance to each mine saying, "Warning: Daily descent into this mine could result in the contraction of black lung and/or other occupational diseases." □

The FBI Would Shred the Past

John Rosenberg

Writing in *The Nation* several months ago, I reported on the destruction of FBI field office files—in my case, after my Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for some of them had been received—as part of a "government-wide record destruction program." The National Archives and Records Service had authorized this destruction "on the basis that the records are contained in Headquarters files in whole, substance, or summarization," but material I received from other field offices that was not duplicated in files released to me from FBI Headquarters (FBIHQ) called that claim into question. (See "Catch in the Information Act," *The Nation*, February 4.)

Recently James Awe of the FBI's Records Management Division acknowledged that three categories of field office files were not duplicated at FBIHQ:

¶"Unknown Subjects"—cases where "the perpetrator" was not discovered.

¶Cases that were never prosecuted.

¶Cases of unsubstantiated allegations or that were outside FBI jurisdiction.

Although the National Archives determined that material "of archival value" was to be found in none of these areas, it is now re-evaluating that appraisal because of numerous complaints. Clearly many of the files already released to individuals under the Freedom of Information or Privacy Acts (FOIPA) concerned individuals who were never prosecuted or whose cases ought not to have been in the FBI's jurisdiction, but who nevertheless accumulated substantial files over the years. Those categories should be re-examined with special care, since they no doubt do—or did—contain information of interest both to historians and private citizens.

In any event, as I pointed out in my earlier article, the question of whether all the important information in the field offices had been forwarded to FBIHQ before destruction may soon become moot because the FBI has requested permission to destroy most of the old headquarters files as well, including a large number of whatever duplicates were sent in from the field. After the FBI's "Request for Records Disposition Authority" was sent to the National Archives in May 1977 James Rhoads, the Archivist of the United States, availed himself of a little, if

John Rosenberg's biography of Clifford Durr, written on a grant from the Rabinowitz Foundation, will be published by Harper & Row.

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ever, used provision of the law that allows him to seek the advice of Congress concerning the destruction of any documents in which there may be Congressional interest. After being passed from one committee to another for nearly a year, the FBI's request—and the Archivist's request for advice about it—have finally come to rest with Sen. James Abourezk's Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and a decision is expected soon.

Let it be said immediately that the FBI, like other government agencies, is responding to legislative requirements that its records system be brought up to date and cleared of material that merely documents the activities of citizens practicing their First Amendment freedoms. Further, it has been fully cooperating with the National Archives in an attempt to preserve material that is of historical value, and its pending request for permission to destroy documents lists five categories of files that would be retained permanently: (*1*) cases that had significant impact on law-enforcement practices; (*2*) cases involving "an actual or potential breakdown of public order"; (*3*) cases directly involving "a full-field investigation for: (*a*) a subversive or extremist organization, with or without foreign connections; or (*b*) a person or persons holding a major leadership position within such an organization"; (*4*) cases directly involving "a person, element or organization whose activities are deemed to pose a substantial and compelling threat to the conduct of national defense or foreign policy"; (*5*) cases that are significant "in terms of intensity of public interest, expressed by (*a*) a demonstrated interest of a Congressional committee or the Executive Office of the President, or (*b*) a high degree of national media attention."

Files that fall under these five categories would be forwarded to the National Archives seventy-five years after they had been closed. Apparently the emphasis will be on category 5, for Awe explained to Ronald Ostrow of the *Los Angeles Times* (March 13): "Basically, it boils down to [retaining] cases of national media attention."

Granting that the FBI is acting in good faith and that its proposal would preserve some historically valuable material, historians and other citizens concerned about the government's approach to civil liberties over the past generation and more have good reason to oppose the pending proposal and to express that opposition to Senator Abourezk before it is too late.

In support of the FBI's request, which he wrote, Awe told me that the bureau has more than 7,000 file cabinets of material and that at least 900 of them are taken up with one classification of subversive matters (the "Request for Records Disposition Authority" reveals that the FBI has 204 classification numbers in its filing system, and ten or so of them relate broadly to political dissidence). Although he cited these figures as evidence of the FBI's need for housecleaning, it can be argued in reply that historians undertaking to digest so massive a government effort would need more evidence from those 900 file cabinets, and others, than would be provided by the records of major investigations of major leaders or famous cases.

The FBI has responded that "historically significant" material would be preserved, but is it really equipped to measure historical significance? Measure, it appears, is all it would do: the "Request for Records Disposition Authority" states that "files with five or less volumes would generally not meet the criteria for a significant investigation or case and will be destroyed after a review, to insure compliance with criteria, by an experienced employee." And even more extensive files are not guaranteed survival: "Files of more than five volumes will be reviewed by seasoned employees using their best judgment in applying the criteria for destruction or retention." (Although it is not clear, presumably the criteria referred to here are the five categories for permanent retention listed above.)

The FBI has complained of being inundated with FOIPA requests. It would be interesting to learn how many of the files they have already released run to more than five volumes. My own guess is that most of what we have learned of the FBI lately has come from files considerably smaller than that. Unless we mean to shut off the source of much valuable information about the history of the government's role in suppressing civil liberties over the past several decades, the FBI should be required to preserve much more material than is called for in its pending request.

It should be added here that under that request those 900 file cabinets of subversive material would be temporarily spared. Several of the 204 file classifications have been exempted from the request, including the all-encompassing "100"—"Subversive Matter (Individual); Internal Security (Organizations); Domestic Security Investigations." This exception is merely procedural, however; if the criteria in the current request are accepted, they will soon be applied to these files as well. (The classification numbers exempted from this request apparently were not selected on the basis of their being controversial and in need of further study, for one so spared concerns illegal wearing of uniforms, misuse of insignia, etc., including "Unauthorized Use of 'Smokey Bear' Symbol.")

In fact, the FBI's classification scheme itself raises questions. If the request to destroy documents is interpreted literally (and we must assume that it might be), the fact that a number of classifications relate to domestic security becomes increasingly important. For example, we have seen that some subversive cases would be preserved, but the request also seeks permission to destroy "Security investigative files with supporting retrieval devices after thirty years of no relevant activity." Turning to the classification list, we discover that that would include files on Sedition, Treason, Espionage, Sabotage, Extremist Matters, Foreign Counterintelligence—"Russia (formerly Internal Security) (Nationalistic Tendency-Foreign Intelligence) (Individuals and Organizations-by Country)," Security Informants, Extremist Informants, etc. Even with the "subversive or extremist organizations" whose files would presumably be preserved, one wonders whether the designations are from the various lists of the Attorneys General or the FBI's own.

In short, preserving only five-volume files on "subversive or extremist organizations" or their major leaders, would—intentionally or not—inevitably lead to a severely truncated and misleading body of evidence available to scholars attempting to document the government's

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record on civil liberties, and it would not satisfy the public demand—evidenced by the large number of FOIPA requests—for knowledge about the practices of our intelligence agencies.

In 1969 the National Archives established a record retention plan for the FBI that bears restatement now. After noting that most federal agencies produce very few records that merit permanent retention, it stated that "many of the records produced by the FBI relate to a number of controversial, if not important, aspects of the history of the United States, particularly the role of the federal government in its relation to its citizens." Acknowledging that many years would pass before these records could be made available, it concluded: "Nevertheless, the Archival value of these records will not decrease, nor will interest in them dissipate."

It would be the height of irony to allow destruction of so many sensitive and revealing documents—as the FBI now requests—after recent events have so tellingly confirmed the accuracy of that 1969 assessment. □

CALIFORNIA TAX REVOLT

THE JARVIS-GANN TEA PARTY

MICHAEL CASTLEMAN

Local government and school officials throughout California are predicting crippling budget cuts if the Jarvis-Gann Property Tax Limitation Initiative (Proposition 13) wins voter approval on June 6. This complex state constitutional amendment proposes to slash property taxes an average of 60 percent and reduce the funds available to local governments and schools by $7 billion, starting July 1. More important, its supporters hope to limit the taxing power of cities and school boards, and to halt substantial increases in property assessments.

The Jarvis-Gann Initiative is the spearhead of a taxpayer revolt; both supporters and opponents speak of it in those terms. Its backers have adopted the tea bag as their symbol, an evocation of the Boston Tea Party. And taxpayers on the warpath are not peculiar to California: sixteen states are considering income tax relief bills, and fifteen are attempting to enact measures that would cut property taxes. By a 2-to-1 margin, Tennessee voters recently approved the first state constitutional amendment to place a ceiling on government spending, and a similar proposal may become law in Massachusetts. The Jarvis-Gann Initiative has already focused national attention on the related issues of runaway property taxes and soaring government spending. If Proposition 13 wins, tax rebels in other states would almost certainly attempt to duplicate its success.

California state Assembly Speaker Leo McCarthy calls the initiative "a disaster [that] would strip fire, police and recreation services and destroy the school system in the state." A. Alan Post, a highly respected former state legislative analyst, predicted that approval of Proposition 13 would "literally create chaos."

Howard Jarvis, a sponsor of Proposition 13, is a crusty 76-year-old conservative Republican who has led several unsuccessful tax protests since 1962. Jarvis, who is noted for his combative style and colorful language, said the doomsday predictions were "a crock of manure." Milton Friedman, the Nobel Prize-winning economist, has announced his "strong support" for Jarvis-Gann, saying that the initiative had thrown local officials into "a literal state of panic," but that it would not have the consequences its opponents predict. Friedman, a laissez-faire economic conservative, believes that government intervention in the economy—particularly in the area of taxation—is a major cause of the nation's economic problems.

In a state where the better-financed side usually wins initiative battles, each side predicts it will raise $2 million for the campaign, which has become the central issue in California politics this spring. (The general expectation that Governor Brown will win re-election next fall has drained interest from the five-way Republican gubernatorial primary.) A majority of California's political, labor, industrial and educational leaders are organizing to defeat Jarvis-Gann, but they concede that the taxpayers are angry and that pro-13 sentiment is strong.

In March, a statewide poll showed that voters with an opinion on Jarvis-Gann favored it 2 to 1, but that most were undecided. Early opinion polls on initiatives can be deceptive because supporters organize in advance to gather the signatures needed to place a proposal on the ballot; only if that succeeds do the opponents rally their adherents. On a small budget, supporters gathered a record 1.2 million signatures—twice the number required. At this point, the vote promises to be close.

Jarvis-Gann would limit property taxes to 1 percent of 1975-76 assessed value. (They have been running in the range of 3 percent of assessed value, so Jarvis would impose about a 60 percent cut.) It would at the same time limit assessment increases to 2 percent a year except when property is sold. Transferred property would be reassessed at full market value. The proposition would require a two-thirds vote of the legislature to enact any change in state taxes, instead of a simple majority, and would prohibit any new property taxes. New local taxes would have to be approved by two-thirds of the electorate.

The initiative would also limit government spending,

Michael Castleman, a graduate student at Berkeley, writes for Pacific News Service.

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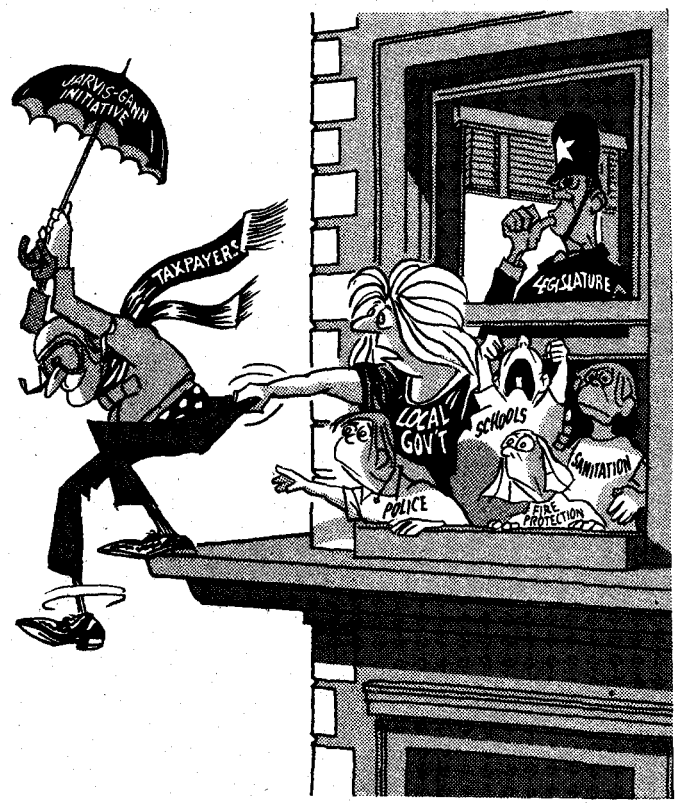
an "instant sunset law," in the words of the California legislature's Office of Research. A recent letter to the editor published by the *San Francisco Chronicle* put it this way: "We know [Jarvis-Gann] will severely disrupt state and city governments. We are also saying we want severe disruption. We do not think we are being irresponsible. We are simply tired of having our pockets picked by a horde of thieves."

Friedman said that Jarvis-Gann would require only a 10 percent budget cut in local government spending, "and is there a taxpayer who can maintain with a straight face that there is not 10 percent fat in government spending?" However, an estimate of Proposition 13's effect on a typical California community suggests that it would be more serious than Friedman's 10 percent, particularly for schools. Redwood City is a suburban community of 60,000 mostly white homeowners 30 miles south of San Francisco. Its assessor announced recently that property assessments in Redwood City would rise an average of 30 percent this year, and that assessment increase notices would be mailed six weeks before the vote on Jarvis-Gann, a move supporters of the initiative applaud. W.D. Higginbotham, Redwood City assistant finance director, said Jarvis-Gann would reduce the city's income from property taxes 51 percent and cut its operating budget 19 percent, twice what supporters of Proposition 13 predict. Higginbotham has drawn up a "Jarvis budget" that the League of California Cities is using as a model of what local communities can expect. The budget proposes cutting 165 employee-years from the present level of 470, a 35 percent staff reduction. Higginbotham said the city would make every effort not to reduce fire and police services, but would cut back elsewhere, perhaps closing all city offices one day a week. The city might trim costs by turning off every other street light, which would save more than $100,000 a year, but would probably raise homeowners' insurance costs.

Dr. Ralph Wilson, superintendent of Redwood City schools, said Jarvis-Gann would cut the school system's property tax income 56 percent and total school revenue 48 percent. If Jarvis-Gann passed, he concluded, "we could either lay off half our employees or close the entire school system at the end of next January."

Nationally, average property taxes per capita have tripled since 1960, from $88 to $260 annually. Robert Brandon, director of Ralph Nader's Tax Reform Research Group, said that some people in Los Angeles were making $10,000 to $15,000 per year and paying $2,500 in property taxes. In 1972, the California legislature passed a bill that reduced the annual permissible increase in the property tax rate from an average of 5 percent to 1 percent, according to the legislature's Budget Committee. Assessed values, however, have risen so quickly that property taxes themselves have continued to increase, often substantially.

From 1971 to 1976, builders' costs for construction of new three-bedroom homes in the Los Angeles area almost doubled, and housing starts fell by 50 percent between 1971 and 1974. When the housing market began to recover in 1975, demand ran far ahead of supply. This



Renault, Sacramento Bee

"Wait! Think of the Children!"

situation is likely to continue in California for some time because the large post-World War II generation has entered the housing market, and because recently adopted environmental protection regulations have slowed the rate at which new homes can be built. As the price of new houses increased, the value of existing ones also jumped. In the Bernal Heights neighborhood of San Francisco, a working-class community, houses that sold for $35,000 two years ago often bring $60,000 today. Thus, despite the tax rate limitations, assessment increases are taxing some families out of their homes.

"Revenge is in the air," San Francisco columnist Herb Caen has written. He said voters may vote for Jarvis-Gann "just for the hell of it—for the chaos it will cause." Though Proposition 13 is designed to cut property taxes 60 percent, the state Assembly Revenue and Tax Committee has calculated that about 42 percent of the projected tax relief to homeowners would be offset by higher federal income taxes because of lost property tax deductions. Furthermore, if the legislature chooses to replace the revenue lost through Jarvis-Gann, as appears likely, it would have to raise $7 billion. Some of that could come from the state budget surplus, estimated at $3 billion to $5 billion, but officials say that state sales, income and business taxes would have to be increased even if government spending were cut.

The legislature's Office of Research has suggested a 50 percent surcharge on the state income tax and a 40 percent increase in the sales tax to generate some of the replacement revenue. The Assembly Revenue and Tax Committee has pointed out that, if state taxes were raised to offset Jarvis-Gann tax relief, "homeowners would probably experience a net tax *increase* because they pay

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a smaller proportion of total property tax than of sales and income tax."

State Finance Office analyst Clifford Allenby said that homeowners pay 75 percent of the state income tax, compared with only 35 percent of the property tax. Property taxes may have tripled in the last decade, but California income taxes have shot up *800 percent*. Inflation is pushing state income taxpayers around the country into ever higher tax brackets.

Renters, who constitute 45 percent of California households, would suffer more than homeowners under Jarvis-Gann. One-fifth of rents are absorbed by property taxes, but Jarvis does not guarantee rent reductions if landlords' tax loads decrease. At the same time, renters would have to pay any increases in sales and income taxes.

Since under Jarvis-Gann, property when sold would be taxed at 1 percent of full market value, identical homes standing next door to one another might have different tax bills. Many legal authorities say this provision is unconstitutional under the equal protection clause. Reassessment of property at full value after sale also means that homeowners would, in the long run, be taxed at a higher rate than businesses since, on the average, homes change hands more frequently than do commercial properties.

Ed Salzman, editor of *California Journal*, wrote: "All you need to know about the Jarvis-Gann Initiative is that Howard Jarvis is the paid director of an association of apartment house owners in Los Angeles. The proposition should be called the Apartment House Owners Enrichment Act of 1978." Allenby reports that the bulk of Jarvis-Gann tax relief would go to landlords and businesses, who contribute 65 percent of property tax dollars. Because Jarvis-Gann discriminates in favor of business, it is curious that an increasing number of corporations—including major property owners like the Bank of America and The Irvine Company—have come out against it. The Irvine Company would save about $9 million per year in property taxes if Jarvis-Gann passed. A spokesman for Irvine said he expected a majority of California corporations to oppose Proposition 13. He explained that, while business leaders favor placing limitations on government spending, they oppose the "meat-ax approach" of Jarvis-Gann, particularly as it would affect schools. The initiative would not reduce net taxation, he said, but simply shift it, and corporations fear that the long-range effects might hurt business. The initiative is poorly drafted and probably unconstitutional, he added, and its passage would result in prolonged litigation that would threaten economic stability for business.

In an attempt to head off Jarvis-Gann at the voting booth, and after two frustrating years of inability to deliver long-promised tax relief, Governor Brown supported, and the legislature has passed, a competing property tax relief bill, the Behr bill. (If it wins, Jarvis-Gann will supersede Behr.) The administration's bill proposes to cut property taxes on owner-occupied homes 30 percent, but would provide no relief for business property. The state income tax credit for those who rent their homes would rise from $37 to $75, and would provide additional savings for the elderly. Behr would also cut government spending for new programs 65 percent. By its provisions, the $1.4 billion in property tax relief (compared with $7 billion under Jarvis) would be replaced from the state budget surplus and would require no new taxes or tax shifts.

Sponsors of the Behr bill hope to undercut Proposition 13 by offering "a more equitable distribution of benefits: lower property taxes for homeowners, no shifted taxes and a firm limit on the amount of revenue local governments can raise from property taxes," according to a *Sacramento Bee* editorial. Its implementation is contingent on voter approval of Proposition 8 in June, which would allow owner-occupied homes to be taxed at a lower rate than business property. Some business interests that oppose Jarvis-Gann may therefore also oppose Proposition 8. If both propositions lose, the California property tax situation will be unchanged. Governor Brown has conceded that, without Jarvis, there would have been no Behr bill, and many observers believe that Jarvis-Gann has already served its purpose as an ultimatum to the legislature to act on property tax relief. Since the initiative process was adopted in California in 1911, three-quarters of them have lost at the polls, but that may not be as bad as it sounds. Carey McWilliams says, "The initiative has not proved to be a particularly effective means of enacting new legislation, but it has provided a means for voters to send a loud and emphatic signal to the state's elected officials."

The Jarvis-Gann Initiative is not the only property tax relief measure in recent California history. In 1968 and again in 1972, similar proposals were defeated 2 to 1. But voters seem to be in a vindictive mood this spring, bent on teaching the government a lesson, as Tennessee voters did recently by slapping a strict limit on government spending.

Almost every newspaper in California is expected to oppose Jarvis-Gann; many already have. Organized labor opposes it, as do an increasing number of corporations and the state Democratic Party. The Republicans are divided, and the party took no position on the proposition at its recent convention. Only one of the five candidates for the GOP gubernatorial nomination has endorsed it.

Whatever the outcome of the Jarvis-Gann vote, the anger and militance of taxpayers who believe that property taxes have become exorbitant is unlikely to subside. Most observers agree that in the future, in California and elsewhere, states will act to shift the tax burden away from property taxes and toward the progressive income tax. It remains to be seen, however, whether this anticipated shift would quiet the criticism of government spending inherent in the Jarvis-Gann efforts, or stimulate attempts to place a ceiling on taxation by enacting sunset laws to restrict government spending.

Governor Brown said the Behr bill passed "in the nick of time," but Jarvis-Gann did set a new record qualifying signatures, and at the moment it looks as though it just might win. □

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ON TRUTH IN PUBLISHING

The Cost of Integrity

RICHARD KLUGER

Discount, if you will, the tablets of Mount Sinai as a special signed edition, and the fact remains that books through the ages have earned humanity's high regard as semi-sacred objects. Especially in contrast to the daily press, whose product is designed to self-destruct by sunrise next, and to even more artfully created periodicals of opinion and sensation, books have been our truth bearers through the generational divide. But standards change with time and technology. One generation's conception of "truth" may be found by its successors as permissive and simplistic. The gentleman publisher of yore, far more concerned with felicity of style and orthodoxy of sentiment than the research methods of his authors, perpetrated more than his share of what we would today label consumer fraud. Plagiarism was common, attribution of sources often lax, documentation second- and third-hand or by rumor, and scholarship as much a matter of intuition as industry.

It is harder now, and truth a sterner taskmaster. We all know so much more. There are so many machines interconnecting us all, so many books and journals and newspapers from throughout the global village in common circulation. The whole earth is accessible to a writer, and there is scant excuse for getting the details of the landscape wrong, or attributing false folkways to a people. There are so many libraries bursting with source materials—diaries, letters, memoirs, minutes of meetings, transcripts of hearings. There are photocopying machines and tape recorders to help collect it all more precisely. And every field is subdivided into a dozen narrower disciplines each with its pecking order of experts, appraising and assessing. Indeed there is so much raw data out there now at the writer's disposal that it is nearly impossible to detect small acts of scholarly distortion or manipulation that an author cannot readily defend rationally and probably even metaphysically.

If the writer today may be held to a stricter standard of truth, may less be asked of publishers? The latter, though, appear to have been smitten in a different way from authors by the onslaught of modernity. The camera, the telephone, the phonograph, the movies and, most devastatingly, television, have all profoundly altered reading habits. And so our literature has been forced to compete with forms of communication that numb and transfix rather than stimulate us. To gain and hold readers, publishers are turning to wares that are increasingly blatant, teasingly unverifiable, and full of short, easy answers in a world that seems to grow more complex, intractable, and toxic by the month.

Other industrial developments have affected publishers. The paperback has assumed command of the market. Books are now cheap, ubiquitous, disposable without guilt, and delightfully profitable to the communications giants and conglomerates that have absorbed all but a handful of the small, independent houses. Mass production means higher stakes; hoopla and hype attend the launching of the latest list, heavy in escapist fiction of undetectable literary merit and self-help books of dubious need and efficacy. A "publisher" now refers less to a person of refined taste and committed values than to a place of business, to an institution, a locus of power and profits. Editors are likely to be rated by the number of six-figure paperback sales their judgment has yielded, not how many National Book Award nominations.

Of course many works of quality are still being published under the guidance of people who continue to view books as the repository of our best sustained thinking and most precise and graceful expression. But they are receiving proportionally less attention and promotion than the outpouring of meretricious merchandise—pseudo-histories that are half-factual, half-fudgicle; quasi-scientific revelations, filled more with demons than plausible data; recipes for self-shrinkage (of body and soul) that exploit our severest anxieties; memoirs by the celebrated-but-vapid and the discredited-and-still-bitter. . . . Nevertheless, the serious reading public persists in holding the purveyors of our literature to a standard of integrity unheard of in other industries. We continue to think book people are a special breed, no less spiritual than the talent they superintend. It is an antiquarian notion.

Some editors and publishers may yet (and even deservedly) view themselves as the least appreciated of freedom fighters, grimly defending the culture against implacably debasing philistinism. But most gather their rewards to the extent they prove quick-witted showmen in the compulsively competitive word-packaging business. Balancing the demands of truth, art, narcissism, and Mammon makes trade-book publishing the most schizophrenia-prone enterprise in the private sector of the U.S. economy. Ultimately, however, those who operate it must defend the basic values implicit in the book form itself or they will wind up running a medium without a message.

(1) Is it part of the publisher's responsibility to make sure that a nonfiction book is true—that there is adequate, accurate, relevant support for its statements? To the extent that a publishing house cares at all about re-

Richard Kluger has been on all sides of the book business—as an editor (at Simon & Schuster and Atheneum), publisher (of Charter House Books), book review editor (of The New York Herald Tribune*), critic (at* New Times*), and author (of, among other works,* Simple Justice*, nominated for an NBA in history last year). His new novel,* Star Witness *(Doubleday), will be published in January.*

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taining its moral position in the community, the answer is of course it must share in the responsibility. Otherwise you are talking about a print shop, not a publisher. What else does the publisher's colophon mean but that it testifies to the legitimacy if not the sentiments of the books it publishes? Book buyers, booksellers, and reviewers all look to this seal of approval of (if not agreement with) the honest effort a given volume represents. All but the most cynical, conscienceless of publishers are obliged to assure themselves that the great preponderance of the material in every work they bring out is substantially true and accurate.

Few publishers would disagree publicly. But in fact, they shift the burden of responsibility in most cases to the author, who by contract is required to indemnify the house against damages resulting from any false statements or misinformation in the book. On the face of it, this is not an unreasonable position. Even the most conscientious of authors are necessarily selective in assembling their materials; how, short of retracing the entire course of a book's research process, can the publisher decide whether the evidence presented is indeed factual, whether cited sources have been quoted correctly and in context, or whether omitted data might materially challenge the validity of the author's conclusions? Plainly, the publisher cannot serve as omniscient monitor.

But to state the difficulties of the screening process is not to excuse its haphazard application. Publishers may say that what they basically pay an author for is the selection and arrangement of information in a pleasing form, and the most they can be expected to do is to spot-check it for authenticity. As a cost of doing business and retaining their literary franchise, however, they are also obligated to provide enough competent editorial personnel to review every nonfiction manuscript carefully—editors with the time and training to assess the substantiality of the material, the logic of the organization, the aptness of the style; a copy-editing department that hunts for statements factually suspect, arguments internally inconsistent, inferences unwarranted, non sequiturs, and sophistries plain and fancy; a house lawyer or outside attorney to scour the manuscript for libel, invasion of privacy or other illegalities. Unfortunately few publishers properly fund this in-house editorial apparatus, preferring to rely instead on the author's professional standing (and wallet). Pressed to the wall, the publisher may partially ascribe such nonfeasance of duty—or minimal performance thereof—to the literary license initially granted certain authors; that is, the work is presented to the public essentially as a piece of personal opinion, or idiosyncratic advice, or calculated speculation, or frothing polemic, and its "truth quotient" is both unascertainable and irrelevant. The reader is free, in such cases, to accept or reject all or part of the work upon an exercise of critical judgment. Rarely, however, will the publisher candidly label such a book for what it is, and the uncritical public gets hooked. That's book-biz.

(2) Is the responsibility of trade publishers in this regard different from that of university presses and scholarly publishers? No. Unless publishers of every sort are committed to making the American free press a true press as well, it is not at all clear that our liberty is incontestably better than someone else's tyranny. A license to lie in print marks the system that permits it as corrupt at its core.

Trade publishers are not required to place the broadening horizon of human knowledge above their quest for profits, and so they will often elect to pass up a work of valuable social content that is not likely to sell beyond a small professional circle. But once a trade house agrees to take on a title, whatever its sales potential, it ought to submit the work to thorough editorial inspection comparable to what the academic presses manage. Few trade houses do.

University presses, it may be argued, are subsidized entities and can therefore afford to hire outside experts to evaluate their manuscripts carefully, and to turn out punctiliously edited, handsomely designed, decently bound books selling at extraordinarily high prices the copy. After all, they are issuing books for the ages. But so, too, are the trade houses, even if it sometimes happens by inadvertence. If they wish to remain pillars of civilization, even while coining a fair return on equity, they cannot escape the incumbent costs of a staff adequate to authenticate those books requiring it. By a similar token, university presses ought to open their lists to nonfaculty authors who produce works of scholarly merit that trade houses will not accommodate. Not all esoterica is divine, nor all untenured scholarship dubious.

(3) What is the obligation of the editor to keep the author honest? Under what circumstances should a special reader be brought in? If the problem is literally the honesty of the author, the editor's duty is clear—or he is an accessory after the fact and, being better fed than the probably desperate author, the more culpable of the pair. But the real issue is more likely to be one of perspective. Authors are unavoidably myopic about their own work; editors, working on several dozen books a year, have the advantage of detachment. The editor who, whether out of sloth, overwork, or unwillingness to muddy the water, declines to offer an author a candid appraisal of his manuscript, and most especially those sections of it that would bring the veracity of the work under question, dishonors his profession.

It is their critical skills, in theory, that distinguish editors from publishers, who are primarily impresarios and controllers. In practice, however, editors who prosper in the book business are the ones who act more like publishers, enlisting and ego-massaging authors while maintaining close contacts with agents, reviewers, reprinters, book clubs and the house sales force. That leaves little time and energy for sifting over the manuscript, a task either feinted at or passed over to underlings who may lack the experience or will power to confront authors with their lapses. Besides, the pressure is on to get the book into the production pipeline.

To the extent that an editor wishes to disengage from the often tedious process of editing, he or she has the compensatory duty to become familiar with the character,

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work habits and neuroses of an author, all of which must be taken into account by the people to whom the sponsoring editor yields the inspection job. The editor must bring the criticisms of the support staff to the author's attention, not gloss over them. And when an editor's personal expertise does not extend to the subject of the book, there should be no hesitation at enlisting outside experts to review the manuscript. Too many houses balk at this added expense, and some authors view the process as an indignity. This is unfortunate. Given the demands on editors nowadays to produce talent and keep it happy and productive, publishers ought to encourage the spot-hiring of such outsiders as a minimal investment in the integrity of their product line and the mental health of their key personnel. Writers who resent, instead of welcoming, expert scrutiny of their work may be suffering from more than normal paranoia (a chronic occupational condition) or terminal laziness when invited to adjust their immemorial prose. Both maladies may be overcome by selecting outside readers agreeable to the author. □

The Respondents

EDWARD L. BURLINGAME

Senior Vice President of J.B. Lippincott Co., Publishers

A note from *The Nation* accompanying Richard Kluger's essay described it as taking "a strong position" on the issue of a publisher's responsibility for the truth of his nonfiction books. Since Mr. Kluger announces that he favors truth, thoroughness, art and taste and opposes lies, laziness, hoopla and escapism, he might seem a hard man to quarrel with. But he is not.

His essay leans heavily on the premise that publishers ought to share a common commitment to defend "the basic values of the book." But what ought to be vigorously defended is free expression, not "basic values," words which take on an increasingly ominous ring the longer one thinks about them. Kluger tells us what he believes those values are, but he fails to appreciate the possibility that others as well-intentioned as himself might not share his perception of either "basic values" or truth. Clearly Kluger approves of liberty, but he seems not to make the connection that a free society benefits from a varied, unrestricted publishing community and not from a self-appointed elite guarding culture and the flow of ideas with an orthodoxy of belief about what our "basic values" ought to be.

Mr. Kluger urges all publishers to commit themselves "to making the American free press a true press as well" without apparently realizing that by qualifying a free press you no longer have one. Publishers should not present as truth what they know to be false, but this is a situation which I think seldom arises. More often the truth or falsity of a controversial work either is not susceptible to proof or is a matter of opinion. Mr. Kluger would have publishers rely on "experts" in such instances. Has he contemplated what happened at the hands of "experts" to figures such as Semmelweiss? Semmelweiss's theories about puerperal fever were greeted with such venomous hostility and scorn by the scientific establishment of his day that he was driven to exile, insanity and, finally, to suicide. Freud's writings about infantile sexuality inspired a similar ferocity. Suppose Freud's publisher had submitted his manuscripts to members of the Neurological Institute for authentication? I don't know why Kluger isn't more suspicious of the impartiality and vision of "experts." He should be.

Finally, Kluger solemnly states that "a license to lie in print marks the system that permits it as corrupt at its core." The authors of the First Amendment, on the other hand, felt that it was better to run the risk of exposing the public to lies than to permit the adoption of some system of pre-censorship, but then they had greater faith in the judgment and durability of the common man than does Richard Kluger. □

IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ

President of Transaction/SOCIETY

and

MARY E. CURTIS

Editor in chief of Praeger Publishers

Maintaining standards of truth in nonfiction publishing is an important goal, but it is necessarily a shared obligation. In the main, the amount of intentional deception that goes undiscovered is small. For example, the three books mentioned in the *The Nation*'s letter of invitation to participants in this symposium (Alex Haley's *Roots*, H.R. Haldeman's *The Ends of Power*, David Rorvik's *In His Image: The Cloning of a Man*) have received different sorts of criticism regarding their standards of truth. Apart from the introductory essay, *Roots* was not billed as nonfiction but as a piece of imaginative reconstruction which provided a collective vision of the slave roots of American blacks. It was criticized as inaccurate by those who took it as a literal tracing of a single family tree. H.R. Haldeman's *The Ends of Power* may be a more revealing statement than many of the fiction and nonfiction potboilers that followed Watergate. In part, the book aroused curiosity since Haldeman, although Nixon's closest aide, had previously revealed little self-interest by refusing to discuss Watergate. One can accuse Haldeman of a stubborn inability, even now, to grasp the magnitude of the Watergate affair, but not even his most severe critics have labeled him a liar on the larger issues. Certainly his version is as credible as President Nixon's interpretation.

The Rorvik volume is more problematic, not so much because the author has claimed to have evidence that a man has been cloned but because the promotion asserts that the publisher is an adequate judge of the veracity of these claims. Since Lippincott is a major publisher of medical texts, its trade division is clearly suggesting that they consulted in-house expertise on the scholarly side; and this may account for the disturbance felt by the scientific community, which was not, apparently, consulted at all. Even the Clifford Irving book on Howard Hughes might have passed muster as imaginative biography—the problem here was fraud in labeling. The author sought a big advance, and the publisher sought big profits by claiming in its advance publicity that the book was autobiographical. But as the Rorvik/Lippincott case seems to indicate, this seems to have been more an example of shared greed than publisher negligence.

Aiming for the goal of truth in what is published is certainly no less important in commercial (trade) publishing than in scholarly publishing. The possibilities for deceit are simply greater in trade publishing, not so much because of the greed of one kind of publisher and the altruism of the

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other, or because one employs lower editorial standards and does not have its books professionally reviewed. Scholarly publishing is simply different. Individuals doing research are well-known and professional constraints are far clearer than trade publishing allows for.

Moreover the use of outside readers can serve as a check on questionable material and author reliability, but any argument that commercial houses should adopt university house standards in this respect betrays ignorance of how university presses really function. The outside reviewer of scholarly material does not work simply for financial compensation. It is a professional obligation as well. Academic reviewers read manuscripts because they are interested in learning more about a subject in which they are already knowledgeable, because they do not want to see poor material published, and because they want to see a good book strengthened insofar as possible. Implicit in the reviewing process as used by university presses is an understanding that publishing resources for scholarly books are finite, and that a bad book could take the place of a good book. Furthermore, a bad book could have a negative influence on the development of a discipline. In short, the reviewer's purpose is not solely to assess accuracy in a journalistic sense but to assess merit, which may be quite different. It is true that some university presses have moved dangerously close to pure profit-motive publishing, and this raises many questions about the future of scholarly publishing. But this is meant for another symposium.

The difference between trade publishing and scholarly publishing boils down to this: people read scholarship because they feel they must keep up with their field and maintain their professional reputation and abilities. In trade publishing, people read because publishing hype has made them want to read a book. Demand is created; thus the marketing of a trade book is in part the stimulation of interest rather than, as in scholarly publishing, the tapping of preexisting interest.

If trade houses were to employ prepublication reviewers, they would do so for very different reasons than scholarly publishers. Trade houses would generally be concerned with protecting the author and the house against error and legal liability. They would perform their work primarily for the money. The fact that his book had been professionally reviewed might well make an author more comfortable, and it might result in fewer suits or reduce the loss factor if a suit was brought. But there might also be a risk, for there is no existing norm of advance reviewing of trade books as there is in scholarly publishing. Moreover, the public may not want to read what the experts would have them read and vice versa. Mass taste is not elite taste; the art in trade publishing is balancing the demands of the former against the standards of the latter. Shouldn't the final judgment be made in the marketplace?

The post-publication reviewing process should not be overlooked. It plays an important role in scholarly publishing, but an even more important role in trade publishing because reviews are usually published closer to the actual publication date of the book. The vigorous exchanges that characterize post-publication analyses are the finest safeguard against shoddy intellectual merchandise. Doubtless there is logrolling and back scratching; the trade publisher's promotion machine is geared up precisely for this purpose. That said, the large number of media outlets both great and small and the relative autonomy of journals and periodicals from book manufacturers still provide a meaningful form in which the adequacy of works can be tested.

Questions about truth, as opposed to merit, must be tempered by concerns about censorship. In the case of presumably serious works published in a commercial manner, the question of accuracy has often been more problematic, even as it becomes less important. James Watson's *The Double Helix* may not be an absolutely accurate description of the shared discovery of the structure of DNA. Velikovsky's *Worlds in Collision* may be nonsense or an apt description of how our planetary system was formed. Resolving these questions is not the publisher's responsibility. In the case of the commercial publication of books by individuals whose reputation rests on their scholarly achievements, the concerns and the responsibility belong to the scientific community. That community has ample access to publishers, commercial and scholarly, to make known its objections after publication. Martin Gardner in *Fads and Fallacies of Modern Science* has made a decent living exposing fraud and chicanery in scientific writing. In the world of politics, where the content of truth is filtered through a series of ideological properties, it may be dangerous to insist on canons of pure truth. Perhaps it is more important that the public is made aware of possible biases and sentiments through the post-publication reviewing process.

Karl Marx, in his early essay: "Remarks on the New Instructions to the Prussian Censors" nicely expresses the rationale behind most publishers' reluctance to censor.

> Are we to understand quite simply that *truth* is what *the government ordains*? . . . Freely shall you write, but let every word be a genuflection toward the liberal censor who approves your modest, serious good judgment. Be sure that you do not lose a consciousness of humility.

With these mocking words, Marx made plain that the problem for a democratic society is less the occasional charlatan or liar who carries off a literary swindle than the all too frequent demands by the state and, in our age, the State Publishing House, to protect the public by preventing access to controversial materials. The best safeguard against fraud is a free and untrammeled publishing network. Fail-safe systems urged by those who would make the publisher a Guardian of Truth represent a cure far worse than the disease. Truth can be guaranteed when the only publisher is the Government Printing Office—but may that time of perfection never descend on our land. □

DONALD S. LAMM

President, W.W. Norton & Company

One need not dismantle Mr. Kluger's main thesis to demonstrate that he pushes it too hard and too far. Lurking in his statement appears a dread that publishers are more interested in bucks than books, that the truly worthy works of our time are being crowded out by trash and trivia. Chances are that he has been spending too much time gazing at the best-seller charts where some titles do, in fact, rise to the top on bursts of hot air. It is not a new phenomenon nor does it portend the decay of cultural standards. More than a century ago, Samuel Smiles's *Self Help* outsold the novels of George Eliot and Thomas Hardy by a wide margin. But who now reads Smiles except devotees of Victorian studies? And even today a considerable number of firms survive and prosper without favoring the merely fashionable over books that will wear well in any season.

What is worth debating with Mr. Kluger is not the bottom line but the title page. An author's name appears there; so does the publisher's. That the two come within inches of each other is no accident. For the art of publication involves a union that is much tougher to dissolve than the act of marriage. Publishers who permit slipshod editorial

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practices in their houses soon discover that authors seek shelter under other imprints, that agents send their best properties elsewhere, that, consciously or not, reviewers may pass over a title after a glance at its colophon.

When it comes to original publications, as opposed to reprints, the successful editor is not the person who always turns up at an auction with the fattest wallet. Instead, he or she builds a reputation on the very skills that Mr. Kluger finds wanting in many publishing firms: the ability to dispel patches of foggy argument, to rout out inaccuracies, to alter a graceless phrase, to spot statements that should be checked by counsel for potentially libelous content, to marshal expert outside readers when the content of a manuscript extends beyond the editor's own competence. Effectively functioning, an editor is an author's severest critic. But a critic is not a collaborator.

This distinction should be kept in mind, for it points up several weaknesses in Mr. Kluger's contention that an editor is charged with keeping an author honest. In the first place, an editor has to select authors with care. If an established writer ventures into waters that are too deep or fast moving for his skill, the editor should be frank to say so before a contract is signed. But once it is agreed that the author has the subject matter under control, then the author should not expect an editor to serve as a surrogate in the hard labors of research or writing. Nor can a copy editor track down and verify each statement purported to be factual. It is one thing to spot a quotation that lacks attribution; it is quite another to catch an author who has lifted material from an obscure source. Plagiarism is the darkest literary art, usually difficult to detect and even harder to prove. An author must attest to the originality of his writing; he cannot slough off that responsibility on his editor.

There are other limits to the distance an editor can go to assure the accuracy of a manuscript. Some are imposed by the nature of the work. Who would Mr. Kluger select to corroborate statements in a memoir once the documentary record runs out? Who, for example, could be called on to vet H.R. Haldeman's *The Ends of Power*? John Ehrlichman? Richard Nixon? King Timahoe?

Then there is the matter of time. University presses generally have the luxury of publishing at a stately pace. Shifting world events are not likely to disturb the findings of a scholar, even an adventurous one. Perhaps the greatest risk is that another academic working the same vein might bring his precious metal to the surface first. Commercial nonfiction faces the possibility of competition and other dangers as well. It can be battered by the random shocks that make yesterday's headlines obsolete—the death of a political leader, discovery of yet another subatomic particle, the first three-minute mile. Thus, an editor at a trade publishing house must be wary lest a manuscript not merely ripen but spoil with age.

In the end, a publisher's accountability might best be judged by the claims he makes for his wares. "Definitive," "unique," "pioneering," "monumental"—such adjectives have lost their power through repeated use and misuse. Since restraint in the pursuit of the consumer is alien to American advertising, the publisher who uses the expression "the last word" should be prepared to eat it. □

JAMES LANDIS
Editorial director of William Morrow & Company

It all comes down, as so much does, to a matter of trust. The editor expects the writer of nonfiction to tell the factual truth. A lack of such expectation breeds distrust in the very heart of the relationship that itself is at the very heart of the publishing process. Anyone who says, with reference to the particular matters under discussion here, "Authors are unavoidably myopic about their own work," had best remain an author and forget editing; the poison of distrust already bubbles at his lips.

The writer must be seen as the higher authority. The public has such a view, even vision. So should the publisher. Why else make a contract (almost inevitably for a book "as yet to be written"), pay the writer, and pay again to print, bind, and distribute the writer's book? It is not the publisher's responsibility or position to police the work of those who support him. And if it were, the publisher would fail at it anyway, as Mr. Kluger acknowledges in speaking of publishers' assuring themselves that "the great preponderance of the material in every work they bring out is substantially true and accurate." Why not *all* the material? Why only "substantially"?

Because it's impossible. But, responsibility or not, editors try anyway. Editors: it's the authors who expect them to "act more like publishers," but the editors, regardless of how "little time and energy" they have "for sifting over the manuscript," still do so because a twelve-to-twenty-hour-day does allow time, and the joy of the work bestows so much energy that sleep becomes, essentially, a waste of time. Editors read every word, sometimes once, sometimes, as one editor in the business makes his strange habit, eleven times. Editors comment. Editors criticize. Editors ask questions. "Verify." It's a question and a demand at the same time and the word with which I'm most familiar in terms of the checking of accuracy. An editor should ask questions, not answer them. But all this is not the editor's responsibility nor his main task: his main task is to deal with language, with a whole other kind of accuracy: is the writer achieving clarity with words, is the writer achieving perhaps beauty?

I have little doubt that virtually every book published is "preponderantly" accurate. I have little doubt too that virtually every book published contains some unintended factual errors. Books (written books, as distinguished from assembled books; we *do* expect *The Guinness Book of World Records* or *The World Almanac* to be accurate) are too important for us to becloud our appreciation of them with an obsessive concern for the accuracy of their factual content. Facts do tyrannize. Worry over them does more so. Lack of concern for, yes, felicity of style (style! the essence of anything that's written) does more so again.

This is not to say that publishers are or should be unconcerned with accuracy. Regardless of whether they consider it their responsibility, they attempt it anyway, through quite a rigorous fact-checking process, carried out in particular by copy editors and proofreaders (who do a lot more than merely read proof against a manuscript). And they succeed (within the generous limits implicit in Mr. Kluger's otherwise rigorous and comfortably—for him—luxurious guidelines).

But once again, writers are the authorities and must be trusted as such. (Outside authorities—the "experts" are, by the way, not to be trusted, for they tend so to lack the very objectivity the publisher pays them to provide when they comb through another's work in their own area of expertise; "Crabs, crabs!" they so often come out crying, infested with that old competitive itch.) Writers must also be trusted as honest women and men. We cannot defend ourselves against the liar. Except with distrust. And distrust is as much a poison in a publishing relationship as it is between any two people. It leads to something far worse than a few honest mistakes in an otherwise pristine life

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(or work). It leads to, among other things, such unnecessary arguments as cover these pages. □

JOHN LEONARD

Chief Cultural Correspondent of The New York Times

I don't quarrel with Mr. Kluger's principal points. Of all the so-called "information delivery systems," the book is the only one traditionally associated with the integrity we assume of a work of art. We don't wrap fish in a book; we press flowers in a book. If a book creeps out of the sleazy night, if it is a lie, we have a right to ask: under whose auspices is this lie proclaimed? It is a form of pollution, and the manufacturer should be liable and accountable. If, after all, I lie in the pages of my newspaper, my newspaper will be sued, and I will be fired. This is as it should be—a reflection on the judgment of my employers for allowing me to lie, and a reflection on my character for my having done so. Of course, we will report what a Haldeman or a Rorvik says; we will also, if we are doing our job, seek corroboration, record dissent, register qualms, and editorialize. We are not, or ought not to be, mindless conveyors of sensationalism, wastepaper baskets for inflamed opinion, servile speaker-systems. We check it out.

There will be much heavy breathing about the First Amendment. I am, myself, a heavy-breathing absolutist on the subject. The Nazis have a right to march in Skokie, Ill. and the American Civil Liberties Union quite properly defends that right. I would, however, think less of someone who, not really knowing whether what the Nazis said was true or not, organized the march, paid for the placards, sold tickets and ran the concession stands.

Sure: writers fantasize. Fantasies are sometimes interesting. Fantasies can also be dangerous—to all of us, if the fantasy appears in, say, a medical textbook; and to a publishing house if the fantasy, like Clifford Irving's, pertains to the life and times of a litigious party. You can bet that a medical textbook will be checked out by experts. You can also bet that, since Clifford Irving, publishing houses have lawyers looking for libel as if it were ticks in the hair of prose.

Somehow, though, fantasies about history and science are presumed undangerous, especially if they're moneymakers. This isn't new. There were just as many bandits and cads in publishing at the turn of the century—when they were fabricating the myths of the Old West or proving the natural inferiority of black people—as there are now. The difference now is that the bandits and cads belong to the Century Club, and go to grand professional meetings in Boca Raton, Fla. or White Sulphur Springs, W.Va. and issue statements of principle on censorship and photocopying machines, and claim to be "gatekeepers" of the culture. They not only publish *Chariots of the Gods*, but they ride in one.

(To digress: I believe that better books are published now, and sold, than ever before in this country. A glance at any best-seller list confirms me in my own opinion. There is the usual trash, but there are also Bellows, Cheevers, Lessings, Didions, Tolkiens and Graham Greenes. Television has absorbed a good deal of the waste product of the imagination. The trouble with contemporary publishing may be the apotheosis of the "acquisitions" editor. An "acquisitions" editor doesn't edit; he or she buys.)

You are not a gatekeeper if the gate is aways open. Fantasies about history are, perhaps, inevitable. Fantasies about science, however, undermine the very authority, the consensus on empirical reality, that science is supposed to represent. To assist in this misrepresentation is, no matter how profitable, dishonorable. □

THOMAS H. LIPSCOMB

President of Times Books

It is American publishing's good fortune to have evolved under the protection of the Constitution's guarantees rather than under the earnest, decent efforts of people like Richard Kluger who wish to save mankind from the risk of error. His is not a new idea. Others have been infuriated by the casual way books have been introduced to the public without a first screening to assure that only those with the highest grounding in truth are allowed exposure. For hundreds of years Europe enjoyed just such a system "grimly defending the culture against implacably debasing philistinism," as Kluger puts it. It was operated by the Catholic Church with the very best intentions, just as are the current systems by various governments throughout the world on behalf of their citizens, lest they be led astray. For the point we too easily forget is that even the Liberty Lobby and the Watch and Ward Society are made of decent people genuinely trying to maintain what they see as standards of truth.

If truth were some kind of absolute factor, a publisher's job would be simple indeed. Personally, I don't know an editor who would intentionally publish a book he thought was filled with errors, and yet we see attacks on the "factual" underpinnings of books all the time. But how easy an issue is this to resolve? Take the latest furor over Allen Weinstein's *Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case*—are the individual sources who denied their testimony as it was described by Professor Weinstein lying to Mr. Navasky, or did they lie first to Professor Weinstein and then tell the truth to Mr. Navasky? Or did Navasky or Weinstein lie to us about what was said? And what of Watergate figures who obviously know something but whose testimonies intermesh with bewildering complexities of contradiction and agreement?

I think it is more useful to look at the comparative dangers of continuing to endure the "outpouring of meretricious merchandise . . . pseudo-histories . . . quasi-scientific revelations," etc., justly deplored by Kluger, or else of missing the opportunity to publish a Copernicus, a Luther, a Darwin, or a Solzhenitsyn, which past experience indicates is often the result of elaborate systems intended to insure that publishers only put out books that are "true." For how damaged are we really by a MacPherson/Ossian, a Trelawny, a T.J. Wise, a Clifford Irving, or if he be party to a hoax, a David Rorvik? I would far rather leave it up to different publishers' differing tastes and varying motives in presenting a chaos of authors' books they feel have value, whether in quest of profit or prestige. What can be lost by having authors put their ideas in the record as effectively as they can and letting their readers weigh the evidence?

The controversies over *Roots, Passages, The Memoirs of Chief Red Fox, The Final Days, The Ends of Power, In His Image*, or any other book, should be a useful reminder to us all that a book is only a construct and that it is subject to the intentional and unintentional errors of man and the vagaries of historical fashion. Its value must always be extracted and is not implicit. It is unlikely to even be the holy object the third-grade librarian promised, and it should perhaps be read with all the wariness, anticipated disillusionment, and yet illusioned anticipation of a $12.95 treasure map that has been known to self-destruct more often than lead to buried treasure. □

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WILLIAM McPHERSON

Editor of Book World, The Washington Post

"Truth" has such a noble ring to it—for such an elusive quality.

And of course, when discussing such a grand concept we would rather sound noble. Conditions being what they are, however, we are more accustomed to dealing with slippery ambiguities, stubborn paradoxes and sometimes sounding ourselves rather more slippery and stubborn than forthright and true. Life is like that; so, in fact, are art and history.

Let us take the case of Mr. Nixon's book. Presumably, the facts as he sets them forth will be disputed. Is it his publisher's duty to correct them, to insist that the book be as accurate, as verifiable as humanly possible? Or is it the publisher's duty to present Mr. Nixon's case to the world as he would like it presented, duplicitous or not, and let history judge, as they say? History will judge, in any case—perhaps the more harshly when it has been deceived. It seems obvious that in this instance the publisher's duty is to let Mr. Nixon have his say.

A publisher also believes that it is his duty to make money, thus accounting for the recent book on cloning, not to mention *The Thorn Birds,* or even Mr. Nixon's $2 million memoir. All three may be similarly fictional, though not equally entertaining, which has always been and I hope will remain a legitimate function of books, for without pleasure they are dead. In the case of David Rorvik's *In His Image,* Lippincott felt obligated to print a statement in the book absolving itself from responsibility for the truth of its contents—while simultaneously advertising the book as nonfiction. That is known as trying to have your cake and eat it too—a familiar phenomenon in publishing and elsewhere.

In general, books being published today are more "truthful" than they have been in the past; certainly they are more accurate, if for no other reason than the willingness of certain lawyers to take libel suits on a contingency basis and the currently unsettled state of libel law itself. Information, too, is more readily available; facts are easier to check.

Within the limits of time, money and energy, each of us, publisher or not, has the responsibility to find and reveal the facts insofar as he can ascertain them and there is a point to revealing them. That, I suppose, is what we mean by "telling the truth." But facts are subject to interpretation, and interpretation is subject to judgment, and both are subject to argument, which is where my case rests: publishers ought to publish only what they can defend—in court, at the dinner table, before their consciences. They need not agree with it, they may not even like it—but they must find it defensible. That, it seems to me, is a rule that need not be limited to publishers and publishing. □

PETER S. PRESCOTT

Senior writer at Newsweek

Curmudgeon that I am, I won't grant my friend Richard Kluger even his opening premise. The tablets were *not* signed and we have only Moses's word that Jehovah dictated the curious strictures they are said to have contained. Have books today become "teasingly unverifiable"? What then does Kluger make of Francis Kirkman's *The Counterfeit Lady Unveiled* (1673), or Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year* (1722)? In fact, truth in publishing has been a shaky proposition from the day Johann Gutenberg used movable type to print the bottom line.

I quote from a play, *Return from Parnassus,* published anonymously in 1600: Danter, a printer, says to his author: "But good fayth, M. Ingenioso, I lost by your last booke." Ingenioso, indignant, replies: "Ile be paid deare even for the dreggs of my wit." He proposes a book called *A Chronicle of Cambridge Cuckolds.* Danter's spirits are instantly revived: "Oh this will sell gallantly: Ile have it whatsoever it cost, will you walk on, M. Ingenioso, weele sit over a cup of wine and agree on it."

By precisely such means are books conceived today. The Bible and *The Boy Scout Manual* excepted, books are not held sacred by any but those who make money from them. Kluger's point that truth of a verifiable sort is something that writers and publishers should care for implies that there *is* a verifiable truth, *out there,* which can be determined, but to say so is to deny the slipperiness of fact. If it's tough for an editor to check out a book on cloning, what is he to do with *Principia Mathematica*? If a feminist sounds off on the medieval idea of courtly love, is her editor supposed to say O.K., C.S. Lewis approves, or should he say there was no such thing as courtly love, as D.W. Robertson has argued? If Winston Churchill writes a six-volume history of World War II without mentioning Ultra, which changed the course of the war, should his book be taken off the market?

I believe that the lies told by important men—Churchill, Haldemann, Nixon—should be published; they are part of the record from which truth will be distilled now and in the future. Milton's words are still relevant: "Let [Truth] and falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter." Because I believe that, I believe Kluger to be wrong, very importantly wrong, when he says that if our free press is not a true press our liberty is no better than someone else's tyranny. The difference is this: in America, you don't get dead for being wrong. That is what liberty is, you may continue to live when what you say is not true. A license to lie in print is guaranteed to us by the First Amendment. It does not suggest corruption. It suggests instead a society that can cope with all forms of expression: truth, falsehood, the fumbling in between. □

HAROLD ROTH

President of Grosset & Dunlap

The publisher must share in the responsibility of determining the accuracy of a nonfiction book. However, this simple statement requires elaboration.

In the field of health, nutrition and physical fitness, we at Grosset attempt to have all our books read by a competent authority who can evaluate the material. This does, however, present an interesting problem since we know that there are people who challenge the AMA and other medical authorities as the final arbiters of controversial material. How do we determine the right of imaginative unconventional thinkers to offer theories that may not yet have empirical or clinical evidence to support them? The rigorous requirement for incontrovertible evidence might well keep deserving, if controversial, theories from reaching print. A strict interpretation of factual accuracy might have prevented the publication of Freud's theories and of virtually every other thinker in the social sciences whose work was "ahead of his time." Obviously a large degree of flexibility and open-mindedness is required.

In the case of the *Nixon Memoirs,* Bob Markel, our editor in chief and his staff carefully checked, at substantial cost, the factual basis for any objective statement made that could be checked. This can be done without necessarily challenging the author's right to his interpretation of the facts. But how does one determine the accuracy of an

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autobiography? It seems to me not inappropriate to say that authors less controversial than Mr. Nixon also try to put themselves in the best possible light and tend to explain and justify their behavior.

A fascinating problem exists here about an author's responsibility which your symposium apparently has raised only obliquely. Without shirking the publisher's responsibility for checking the facts, how does one make certain that the author fulfills *his* responsibility without infringing upon his freedom of speech? It seems to me publishers are no more nor less moral or conscientious than other leaders in our society, including authors. Mr. Kluger's unnecessarily negative remarks which suggest that there is some opprobrium attached to success or survival in book publishing seems to me to be graceless, in bad taste, and inaccurate. □

SOL STEIN
Editor and publisher of Stein & Day

Richard Kluger is one of the few great book review editors we have had in this country in my lifetime. I like and respect him, and cannot understand how out of his many years of experience he has come to hold positions so naive.

Truth would become like a battered child if serious works were routinely sent by general publishers to outside specialists for vetting. It would mean soliciting the approval of those who, in the book's field, had an egotistical, financial, or political ax to grind. One of the many things wrong with university presses is that they send manuscripts for "review" to people who can properly be described as biased competitors in the same field.

To whom do I send Bertram D. Wolfe's autobiography, *A Life in Two Centuries*, Stalin, Trotsky, Jay Lovestone, Angela Davis? Or is it my responsibility as a generalist to judge it as I did *Three Who Made a Revolution* a quarter of a century ago?

Is it even practical for the generalist editor himself to check up on the truthfulness of an author by repeating any part of the process that resulted in the book? Patsy Sims risked her life researching her forthcoming book *The Klan* by taping extensive revealing, indeed incriminating, interviews with Klan leaders. I don't know a single editor in American publishing who would be willing to listen to the many hundreds of hours of raw interviews to determine if the quotations are accurate. And, if accurate, do the interviews truly represent the Klan leaders' views or just what one or another said to Sims on a particular occasion? Should Sims's book, which is about a clear and present danger, be held up for a year or two while the publisher checks and double-checks? What experts should it be sent to for outside review, a civil liberties lawyer who has specialized in the Klan and has never had the kind of access Sims had? Someone whose previous work is outdated by what Sims has done, and who is, in fact, a competitor, as it were?

Kluger is not only being unrealistic, he is misunderstanding the function of publishing. The publisher provides the forum, the author provides the work. The job of a general books publisher is to be a strong generalist who develops, over the years, ways of judging the credibility of an author by his use of fact, language, and the fairness of how that language marshals the facts. If a publisher sends work for "review" to outside specialists, is he not both prejudicing the outcome as well as abdicating his responsibility?

The publisher with a concern for the truth will commission works that perform a public service, and will not be intimidated by an IBM or an ITT, who do not like to see investigative works about themselves in print. And if Kluger is interested in furthering truth through books, I urge him to join me in seeking out public-spirited and able lawyers who will—for reasonable fees—defend authors, publishers, and the First Amendment against the hundreds of frivolous and crackpot lawsuits that have made interesting and controversial books a hazard in America. In Britain, if someone sues and loses, he pays for the lawyers. Here, the frivolous litigants often use lawyers who collect a percentage if their extortionate efforts prevail (as they sometimes do with the weak), but the innocent victims have to pay the costs, which has a far more chilling effect on the publication of the truth than Kluger's announced concerns. Does Kluger know the name of the national organization that will not permit any comment on it in any book of any kind, and is reputed to have a multimillion-dollar war chest to drive any offending authors and publishers to the wall? As long as conditions like that exist, Kluger's hunt for author error sounds to me like looking for sand fleas on a battlefield. □

CONGRESS & SALT II

THE POLITICS OF DISARMAMENT

MILTON VIORST

Presumably because both believe that arms control will add an element of nuclear stability to a politically fragmented world, President Carter and Chairman Brezhnev have persevered in the long, agonizing process of negotiating the SALT II treaty. They may be finished sometime this summer. In the Senate, however, are men who distrust either Carter or Brezhnev or both, and/or believe that SALT II will contribute nothing at all to stability. As a consequence, it is far from clear at this point that Carter has the two-thirds of the Senate votes needed to ratify.

A passing thought was given to circumventing the Senate obstacle. In SALT I, which Nixon signed in 1972, the arms control agreement—though not the anti-ABM pact—was endorsed by joint resolution of the House and Senate, an unusual procedure elicited by Watergate considerations. Repeating it would require 51, instead of 67, Senate votes, which would probably be easy to get.

But it would also require a House majority, and that would probably not be easy. Of late, the House has been

Milton Viorst writes on politics and other subjects from Washington and abroad and is at work on a book about the social disorders in America in the 1960s.

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even more irascible than the Senate on foreign policy issues. All of its members, furthermore, must stand for election this fall, thus exposing themselves to the expected high-powered, right-wing anti-treaty campaign. The administration does not stand to gain from such a barrage, so it is unlikely to follow the SALT I precedent. It will stick to the letter of the Constitution and take its chances with the Senate.

The battling over SALT II has been going on since the day Carter pledged, in his otherwise pallid inaugural, that "we will move this year a step toward our ultimate goal—the elimination of all nuclear weapons from this earth." If anything, we moved away from that goal in the ensuing year. But Carter conveyed the sense that he was sincere in his pledge, and the hard-liners have since been suspicious that he is too committed to be appropriately tough on the Russians.

In reality, Carter has from the start—on disarmament as on other controversial issues—put out mixed signals. As chief SALT negotiator he nominated Paul Warnke, who had an excellent reputation as a proponent of arms control. But when Senate hawks put his feet to the fire during confirmation hearings, Warnke professed to be as unyielding as any dedicated right winger. So the new administration missed the first of many opportunities to take a forthright and persuasive public position on arms control principles. The hard-liners got 40 votes against Warnke, more than enough to defeat any SALT treaty. More important, they found they could panic the White House.

Carter confirmed that view when he sent Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to Moscow a few weeks later with his new disarmament proposals. It was advertised as a "comprehensive" program and, as Carter had promised, it did outline a plan for significant mutual reductions in the numbers of nuclear weapons. But it provided for no brakes on weapons technology, where the United States far surpasses the Russians. By any reasonable evaluation, it was an outrageous proposal, which would have required a cutback of Russian power but not of our own. The Russians, of course, rejected the package contemptuously, and it was months before they could be lured back to the negotiating table. It was a bad way for Carter to get started with the Kremlin.

The proposals were so lopsided that they might have been written in the office of Sen. Henry Jackson (D., Wash.), leader of the hard-line contingent, and it is reliably said that they were. This is vigorously denied by Richard Perle, the man who is thought to have written them. Perle is Jackson's conscientious and articulate expert on the intricacies of nuclear strategy. He is a relentless believer not only in the evil intentions but in the irresponsible adventurism of the Russians. Jackson and Perle think alike, but in the tortuous thickets of strategic weapons Jackson lets Perle do his thinking for him.

Jackson has probably never forgiven Carter for humbling him in the Presidential primaries of 1976. He has certainly been deaf to any message saying that the defeat meant popular rejection of his cold-war liberalism. If Jackson still aspires to the Presidency, Carter's persistent image of vacillation will hardly discourage him. Carter may have thought he would make a supporter of Jackson by sending the "comprehensive" program to Moscow, but with each retreat from its untenable positions, Jackson has howled "sellout." He does not say flatly that he will vote against SALT II but it seems unlikely that a treaty can be devised that will satisfy both Jackson and the Russians.

What seems to bother Jackson the most—or, at least, it bothers Perle the most—is the possibility of a surprise first strike. Perle argues, and the administration acknowledges that he is theoretically correct, that by the mid-1980s, under SALT II provisions that would allow the two countries an equal number of MIRV weapons, the Russians could target virtually all of America's land-based missiles. Taking misfires, miscalculations and other failures into account, whether they could actually knock out America's Minuteman strike force is another matter. Perle believes they could, and that they will be tempted to try a nuclear Pearl Harbor.

He acknowledges, of course, that the United States would retain in its submarines and manned bombers a nuclear retaliatory capacity of enormous destructive power but, he says, without Minuteman the Russians would conceivably be willing to absorb America's second-strike destruction. More important, he is not convinced an American President would have the will to use this power—especially if the Russians threatened a third strike that would wipe out America's population and industrial centers. He foresees that this Russian potential, even if never used, would allow the Kremlin to engage in all kinds of mischief, in Europe or the Middle East or wherever, without our having any credible recourse.

The specter goes to the heart of the SALT II treaty. The principle which underlies it is parity, which means that stability is to be assured not by American superiority, as in the past, but by the strategic equality of the two powers. The Russians do not now have as many MIRV weapons as the United States; SALT II would allow them to catch up, and remain at the American level. That is indeed a Russian advantage, whose implications lie not only in armaments but, it appears, in the psyche. The Russians like the idea of being America's equal, and it is theorized that their enhanced self-esteem will itself be stabilizing.

In return, they have also agreed to give up a great deal. When SALT I was ratified, Jackson attached an amendment which stipulated that the United States cannot concede to the Russians a greater number of weapons in any category. The United States had agreed in SALT I that the Russians could deploy greater numbers of land-based missiles, in recognition that they had nothing like our own power in submarine-based and bomber-based weaponry. Somewhat to the surprise of the American negotiators, the Russians agreed to the Jackson principle for SALT II, and were even willing to waive consideration of American strategic weapons based on the Soviet borders in Europe and Asia. But having made certain that the parity principle would be applied to the advantage of the United States, Jackson was now unwilling to accept its implication in the one area where it gave the Russians their own advantage.

As for Perle's forebodings of a surprise attack, the ex-

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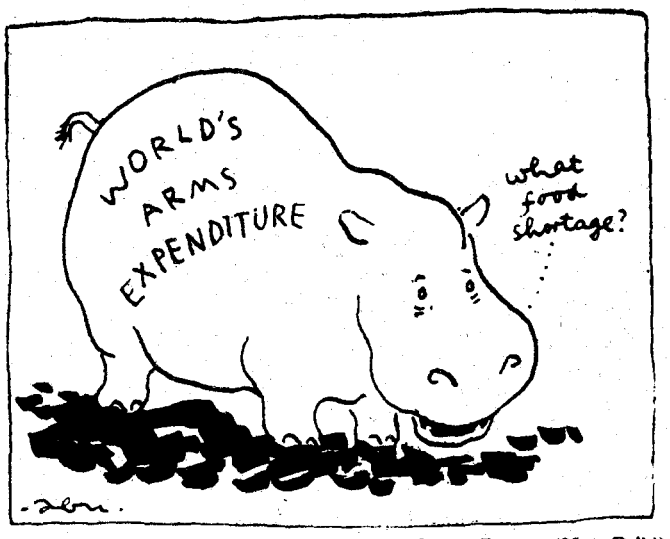

Indian Express (New Delhi)

perts consider it conceivable but within the realm of absolute madness. It is contingent upon (*1*) Russia's absolute certainty that its first strike will destroy the Minuteman; (*2*) its conviction that the United States will be too weak-willed to respond, and (*3*) its willingness, in case it is wrong about (*2*), to accept tens of millions of casualties and the destruction of its organized society. Warnke has said that arms control negotiations must necessarily be based on an assumption of sanity on the part of their participants, that if you include the likelihood of madness in your calculations, there's probably no point in negotiating at all. Refusing to rule it out, Perle regards SALT II as worse than nothing, even if that means a limitless extension of the nuclear arms race. Obviously, many Senators—and millions of Americans—will agree.

From the point of view of the pro-SALT forces, the timing for the treaty is not good. The polls show that public suspicion of the Russians is higher than at any time since the heyday of the cold war. They also show that growing numbers of Americans are uneasy with the perception that the Russians are getting militarily stronger, while the United States is getting weaker. Those who follow foreign affairs, professionally or nonprofessionally, have difficulty understanding the enormous Russian buildup in Central Europe. Finally, the relentless front-page treatment given the disputes over human rights, as well as over the Soviet-Cuban presence in Africa, hardly warms the atmosphere for a Soviet-American accord.

Characteristically, the administration has not helped to clear the air. Vance at the State Department and Zbigniew Brzezinski at the White House continue to squabble over whether a "linkage" exists between SALT and the other outstanding differences between the United States and the Soviet Union. Vance may represent Carter's inner heart, but Brzezinski is in the Oval Office with Carter several times a day.

The State Department people say Brzezinski believes the Russians want SALT more than we do, and that we should use the treaty as a weapon in our overall foreign policy interests. "Arms control is not a reward for good Soviet behavior," Warnke answers. "It's not a favor we do for the Soviet Union. It's not something in which we're being kind to them because they are behaving the way we want them to behave elsewhere." Carter has made a halfhearted attempt to resolve the dispute, coming down in favor of the pre-eminence of SALT. But he has continued to make hard-line pronouncements at crucial moments about U.S.-Soviet relations, and has been just sufficiently equivocal about his commitment to the treaty for the anti-treaty forces to see if they can exploit the weakness.

By insisting that Jackson retains an open mind about SALT II, Perle hints that serious efforts will be made to amend the treaty on the Senate floor. If Jackson succeeds, he'll be able to claim political credit for shoring up the the treaty's alleged weak spots; if he fails, he can claim that his quarrel was not with the goals of arms control but with the particular provisions of the SALT II document. To give Perle his due, his criticisms go well beyond a preoccupation with first-strike possibilities. He is prepared to talk indefinitely on the details of the treaty's inadequacies. One disadvantage the treaty's proponents have is that they lack an expert who is as at home as Perle with the minutiae of disarmament, and no Senator in the forefront of the fight with authority and prestige comparable to Jackson's.

One danger of such a floor fight is that Jackson will somehow persuade the necessary Senate majorities to accept his amendments, and then the Russians will dig in their heels. The Soviet Union, one hears frequently on Capitol Hill, is not Panama, not prepared to swallow humiliating changes for the sake of ratification. The administration has already begun spreading the word that it cannot make the kinds of concession on SALT that it made—rather excessively, some say—on Panama. But Jackson would certainly be delighted to champion a series of amendments he could assert were essential to national security, then claim the Russians had proven him right by rejecting the treaty in its entirety.

The apprehension created by such a prospect extends well beyond SALT II. One consequence would be the resumption of a sky's-the-limit competition in the acquisition and deployment of strategic arms. The United States and Russia have also been negotiating a Mutual Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) treaty to lower the level of confrontation in Europe and a Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB) treaty to cover the gaps in the agreement made between Kennedy and Khrushchev in 1962. Talks are also being held on banning chemical and radiological weapons, and on limiting arms in the Indian Ocean. In addition, questions remain to be settled on the American cruise missile, the Soviet Backfire bomber, the neutron bomb and a variety of other weapons. Warnke points out that arms control is necessarily an ongoing process; he talks of SALT III, SALT IV and even SALT VIII. But for the foreseeable future, the process will stop dead if the Senate refuses to ratify SALT II.

At the moment, the administration's lobbyists figure they can count on 35 to 40 certain votes for the treaty, with 25 to 30 certain votes against. For the most part,

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this was the hard core on both sides of the Panama Canal treaty. One of Carter's problems, however, is that he made no friends among his hard-core supporters in the Canal fight. Some of them thought that, while they went out on a limb for him, the favors went to the fence-sitters—especially to Sen. Dennis DeConcini, the little-esteemed Arizona Democrat who got enormous publicity by forcing the White House to accept his nearly ruinous amendment. There is feeling among the loyal supporters that this time they will hold out for the kind of favors others received over Panama.

At the moment, Carter still does not have a first-rank Senator to carry his fight. His most valuable supporters thus far have been Gary Hart of Colorado and John Culver of Iowa. Both are Democrats on the Armed Services Committee and both are well-regarded, but they lack the power that comes from being around the Senate a long time. Sen. Thomas McIntyre of New Hampshire may emerge as the leader Carter is looking for, but his lobbyists in the Senate would feel more confident if they had Edward Kennedy, or even Frank Church of Idaho, who did the job on the Canal treaty.

The man Carter really needs as the counterweight to Jackson is Sen. Sam Nunn, who succeeded to Richard Russell's Dixiecrat seat in 1972. Though a Georgia Democrat, Nunn has been much closer to Russell's Old South than to Carter's sometime Populism. Yet he is considered a man of intellect, conscientiousness and independent judgment, and he voted yes on Panama. As a member of the Armed Services Committee, his reputation for mastery of complex military issues is excellent. He has not pronounced himself on SALT II, and can be expected to study it with great care. If he declares himself an opponent, the treaty may be dead. However, if he comes to support it, he will give it respectability among conservatives, and may even swing enough votes to make the difference.

Two other crucial personalities are also keeping their own counsel. Sen. Robert Byrd of West Virginia, the Majority Leader, is likely to follow his conservative instincts if the treaty looks like a loser. If the count is close, he will probably be a supporter, as he was on Panama, where he held the fragile pro-treaty forces together. Sen. Howard Baker of Tennessee, the Minority Leader, would like to be the Republican Presidential candidate in 1980. He lost a great deal of credit with the party's right wing by supporting the Panama treaty, and he is unlikely to be provocative to them over SALT unless he believes the treaty has strong popular appeal. Both men are probably indispensable to ratification.

Finally, the outcome is likely to depend most on how well Carter and his people sell SALT II to the public. It is agreed that nuclear war deeply concerns the American people. The polls show, moreover, that nuclear disarmament is an issue more strongly felt than, say, the Panama Canal. Carter never did succeed in explaining to the public why the Canal treaty was in the national interest. He may find it easier with SALT, but so far he has not done well.

When presented with this observation, those close to him reply quietly that he cannot elaborate on the treaty's advantages for the United States while he is still negotiating with the Russians. But by now the principal provisions of the treaty are well known, and the right wing is tooled up to go after them. They have on their side the cold-war liberals, spearheaded by the Committee on the Present Danger, which supports Jackson. The pro-treaty forces have nothing comparable.

Carter has not distinguished himself in the Presidency as an educator of the American people; he may be too diffident for that task. But if he cannot make SALT II a popular issue, if he cannot generate a leap in the polls, if he cannot put pressure on the Senate through grass-roots lobbying, if he cannot convey an urgency which Americans are willing to share, then SALT II will fail. If it does, the consequences will be considerable. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

The Well-Tempered Story

TED SOLOTAROFF

This is the first of a two-part essay. The second part will appear next week, and the whole essay will be published as the introduction to The Best American Short Stories 1978 *edited by Mr. Solotaroff with Shannon Ravenel and available from Houghton Mifflin in the fall and Bantam Books in the spring.*

During the past ten years of editing *American Review* I have seen and published a good deal of short fiction. This experience has been valuable in putting me in touch with a wide range of narrative writing and also with my own standards and prejudices of judgment. At the same time, though, what I've learned tends to complicate and, as I can't help feeling, mock the enterprise of putting together an anthology billed as "The Best American Short Stories" of the year. First of all, I have watched the definition of what makes a piece of writing a short story, or even fiction, pretty much collapse before my eyes and within my own mind. To give just a few examples, I have published a narrative monologue in which the speaker is a story that is trying to find its identity and to stay alive, and another which is based on an imaginary story by Borges. There was also an essay on the implications of the film *King Kong* as seen by a kind of idiot-savant, another which links all manner of material—fictional, historical, personal—into a series of responses to a two-part examination on "The Death of the Russian Novel," and another whose narrative line is a recipe for baking bread.

American Review also published short fiction in the form of meditations and memoirs and vice versa, as well as of chronicles in which the real and the imaginary freely mingle, of an interview, an unsigned letter, the liner notes to an album of songs by a country rock singer. In time I gave up not only trying or even wanting to distinguish the short story from these and other innovations in narrative writing but also even drawing a line between fiction and nonfiction, simply billing whatever wasn't poetry as "prose." So, in first taking up the task of choosing fiction for this collection that distinctly and defensibly restricts itself to the category of the "short story," not to mention "the best," I felt rather like a polymorphous perverse sensualist whose new bedmate practices only the missionary position.

But so be it. Better, as time went on, I found I wanted to construe the problem as an opportunity: i.e., to choose genuine short stories and nothing else and hence do something for the most beleaguered of our literary forms and the waif of the magazine and publishing industry, by showing just how good and interesting and, yes, relevant (the regnant value of our perplexed age), it can be. Walter Benjamin in his magisterial essay "The Story Teller" argued that the art of storytelling was dying out, that it was being superseded by the modern media of information and by its younger and more topical relative, the novel. There are reasons to believe that, writing in 1935, Benjamin was gloomily prophetic, but there are other reasons, embodied in this collection, to believe his prognosis was premature. Or even wrong.

In an interview a few years back, the novelist John Barth speculates that it may be the novel, as we know it, which is passing out of literary history, but this "doesn't mean the end of narrative literature, certainly. It certainly doesn't mean the end of storytelling." Arguing against that article of the modernistic literary faith which holds that plot—the constitutive element of storytelling—is a retrograde device, Barth says that there are "ways to be quite contemporary and yet go at the art in a fashion that would allow you to tell complicated stories simply for the aesthetic pleasure of complexity, of complication and unravelment, suspense, and the rest." One can add that beyond the writer's pleasure, there still lies the reader's, however sophisticated he may be, in the well-told story—a pleasure that may have become distracted, displaced and undernourished, but one that is programmed into his nature as surely as gazing meditatively into a log fire (and not unrelated to it), a pleasure that can be so quickly and powerfully revived by a true storyteller like García-Márquez. And no less basic in the human creature is the pleasure of telling stories. Indeed, the need to do so, as any bartender will tell you.

So, in behalf of the lingering interest in and significance of the short story, I have restricted my selection to those that are intended and identifiable as such. No excerpts from novels-in-progress, which such annual anthologies as this one often fall back upon, no memoirs, lyrical meditations, no involuted narratives or monologues that enigmatically smile at the reader as if to say, "Boo-hoo, where's the story?," no experiments in the nonlinear story, the anti-plot story, the characterless character story. This has meant leaving out of consideration a number of first-rate or otherwise impressive pieces of narrative writing and, in several cases, a certain wrenching of my own heart. Three of my favorite fictional pieces in the final issue of *American Review*, published last year, were Robert Stone's "A Hunter in the Morning," Max Apple's "Disneyad," and the late Meyer Liben's "The Garden." The first two, however, were taken from forthcoming novels, and though each stands very well on its own, and though they can readily be read as stories, I had to pass them by. On the other hand, Liben's account of his initiation to literature through the magic of Marvell's poem and his love for the high school English teacher who both summoned and embodied its glory, seemed to me finally a beautifully rendered sketch rather than a story, lacking a strong complicating element that keeps the issue of the narrative open and charges its resolution.

There were other painful exclusions on these grounds in which pride of editorship wasn't involved. Cynthia Ozick's "Puttermesser," which appeared in *The New Yorker*, is a brilliant portrait of a young woman lawyer, an X-ray, as it were, of her buried spirit, but one whose material and pace seemed to me to anticipate a fuller development of the narrative, so that it appeared to stop rather than end, as though the beginning of a longer work. Or again, there was an arresting narrative by Janet Lindquist Black in the *Massachusetts Review*—"Poika: 1929"—about a boy struggling with his fear in a primitive Finnish enclave in Massachusetts that again left me leaning eagerly in the direction of its

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continuation, rather than with the settled feeling of a completed tale. I could be less uncertain but was still regretful about ruling out other notable pieces that were presented as excerpts or adaptations from novels, such as Don DeLillo's "Players" in *Esquire*, Ralph Ellison's "Backwhacking" in *Nimrod*, and Lee Smith's "Black Mountain Breakdown" in *The Carolina Quarterly*. Another difficult exclusion was Elizabeth Bishop's "Memories of Uncle Neddy" which, while imaginatively told, seemed to me to belong to the literature of remembrance rather than of the story.

In the end, though, I have less trouble and remorse about the "Short Stories of 1978" (really, of course, 1977) part of the title than I do about the front part—"The Best American. . . ." Actually, it should read "North American," since one of the stories selected for the volume and some nine others listed among the distinguished ones of the year come from Canada. But that's easily remedied; it's the phrase "The Best" that casts the more dubious shadow on the enterprise. First, there's the matter of coverage. The Coordinating Council of Little Magazines has some 600 periodicals as members and estimates there are at least another 400 each year that are not. Assuming, very conservatively, that only half of them publish some fiction, there are roughly 500 periodicals from which to choose this collection. And this is not to take into account the short fiction published by the myriad small presses in their collections. All of which is also in a kind of Heraclitean flux from year to year, as the little magazines and small presses come and go, emerge and fold. From the periodicals that had been regularly sent to Martha Foley, and from her own diligent research in libraries, my colleague, Shannon Ravenel, was able to track down 123 periodicals and to go through a total of 500 issues containing well over 1,000 stories. But, despite her best efforts, she was able to read perhaps one-fourth of the stories published last year. From these she screened out some 150 for me to consider, to which I added another fifty or so that I heard about or that I had liked, two of which made it into the collection itself. So, across my mind stretches the shadow of the hundreds of stories that did not reach Shannon, as well as those she did not select (our tastes are reasonably close but hardly identical), or that I did not chance upon on my own.

I am not being unduly sedulous, merely realistic. After a decade of receiving stories for *American Review*, and of traveling around the country, and having unknown magazines, chapbooks of stories, even sheafs of mimeographed sheets thrust into my hands, in which, now and then, a gem of a narrative was hidden away amid otherwise mawkish writing or defiant scribbling—I know how far-flung and often obscure are the places where genuine talent can be found in this ever-expanding and localizing literary culture of ours. I'm also aware of the testy indifference among literary editors, having shared it, toward sending issues to this collection since for many years none of the stories I published in *American Review* were selected, which is what I mean, in part, about the self-irony and mockery of being set up now as the judge of "The Best." (The new policy of choosing a different editor from year to year, which will broaden and vary the standpoints of editorial choice, should encourage many more editors to put Ms. Ravenel on their mailing list [P.O. Box 3178, University City, Mo. 63130].)

Before I take up my own standpoint and give examples of it from the stories I've chosen and some of the ones I haven't, a few words seem in order about the subjectivity, and hence the vicissitudes, of editorial judgment. Lionel Trilling once remarked to the effect that while we are reading a work of literature, it is also reading us, locating the kinds of experience that interest us, the styles and tones of writing we are responsive to, our specific areas of educated feeling, as well as the blind spots and dead spots in our taste, sensibility, and our competence to judge. A literary editor is particularly conversant with this reflective process. In most cases, you know fairly quickly, sometimes even in the first paragraph, whether you're going to be drawn to a manuscript or not. There is that stirring of your imagination by an immediacy of detail or statement or situation, or of encountering a tone that quickly evokes a responsive chord in your being and produces that simple, intimate sense of settling in. Some manuscripts that last for you may be slower in asserting the terms of their appeal, but even so, there is usually a kind of rightness and pleasure from the start—an authority in the voice, a weightedness to the material, that generates interest. If you have to go through a great deal of fiction in a short time—say 200 stories in two weeks or so—you depend a great deal on this rather remorseless process of singling out your type of story (not very different from "my type of woman" or "my type of guy"), for you know that a story that hasn't begun to make its mark after a few pages is not likely to come even close to being one of the "keepers."

But where Trilling's point becomes particularly germane is with the stories that carry you firmly along to the end but leave you cooler than you'd expected, or critical, or otherwise unconfident of their staying power. It's lucid and potent all right, you say to yourself, but perhaps a bit contrived, or crude, or simplistic, or the ending doesn't quite work. Or with those indirect stories that keep you willingly working hard by their skillfulness and intelligence, their subtlety of implication, by the depth at which their point is being kept, but in the end somehow haven't yet taken on a distinctive and reliable force. Clearly something significant is going on here, you say, it moves me but I finally don't get the point, or else, I think I get the point but it doesn't finally move me. But there is also the possibility that either of these problematic types of story is mainly just going past you, reading you and finding you faked out by your own fussiness or willfulness, or finding you impatient, banal, provincial, obtuse.

There have been a number of occasions in the past where I have found myself to be a living proof of this possibility. A story that has left me in one of the above states of being of two minds turns up months or a year or two later in another magazine, I read it to confirm my judgment, and instead find myself now completely in its thrall, except for that corner of my heart that is sinking in chagrin. I have even found a rejected work turning up in my conversation or contemplation two or three years later with a vividness and depth of recall that would impel me, my mouth full of crow, to write to the author and ask if that story (or essay or poem) I had turned down were still available. If it were, more times than not the mark it had left on my consciousness and, no doubt, my unconscious, turned out to be a true one, contributing to the alteration of sensibility that would eventually welcome it wholeheartedly and, conversely, find me to have become a suitable medium for its terms of appeal. On the other hand, now and then, I've eagerly bought a narrative which has turned cold or cloudy in my mind by the time I read it in galleys.

After such knowledge, what forgiveness, as Eliot asks; what enables you to go on trusting your judgment? Well, what you should learn from these cases of self-embarrassment is to try to read, as much as possible, for keeps. So, you arrange things as propitiously as possible, particularly for those manuscripts that make an unmistakable claim on

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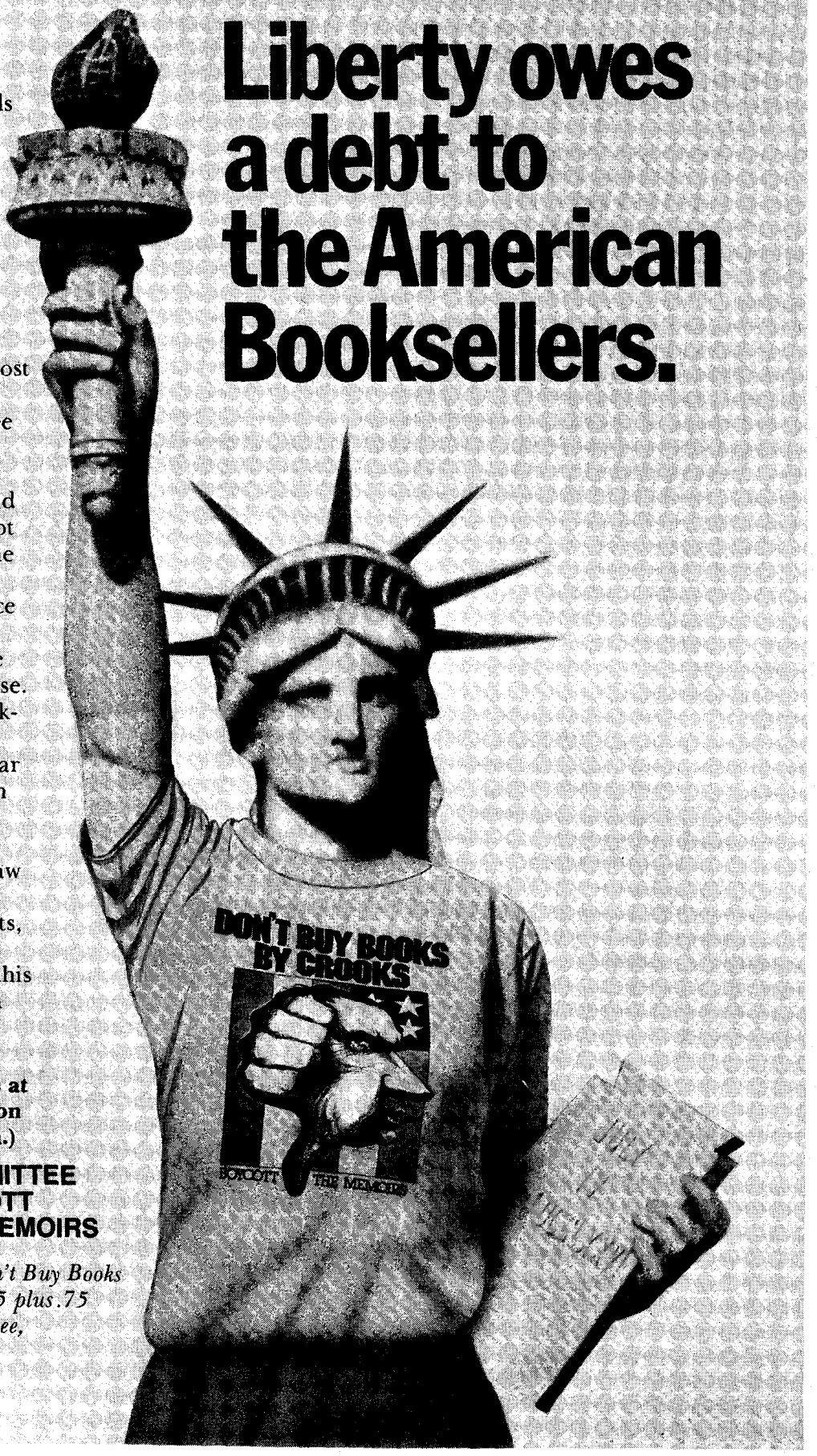

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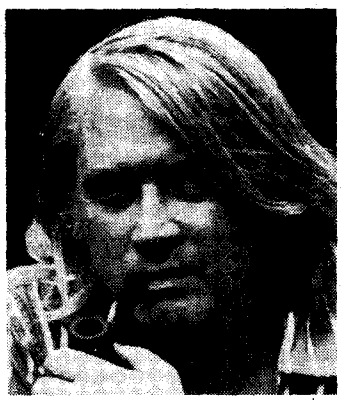

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your attention, that already have begun to matter. If you happen to be tired, distracted, or for some other reason, less than fully present to it, you stop, put it aside, and take it up again later when you can pay close attention, open yourself, weigh its effect more justly. Sometimes you end up perplexed, ambivalent, or still a touch uncertain, and so you wait some more, return to it in a few days or a week and read it again, possibly even wait some more for its force to establish itself or not, once and for all, at that juncture where memory and sensibility provide the ground of a final judgment. In other words you try to let the work read you as propitiously as possible, as well as to imitate, in your small personal way, the selective process of history.

Among those sent to me was a story by Eleanor Clark called "Zoysia Grass" that I read three times. It's a beautifully felt narrative of the slow decline into senility of a gallant old widow, the narrator's stepmother, Maddy. It is told from a complex, highly compressed point of view, a memory image of her twirling a stick of asparagus and bent over, looking for something, as she comes down a garden path. But this image is made four-dimensional by the flow of time through it that renders the moment remembered as a commingling of her odd but rich marriage, her frustrations in the present, and the pathetic failing that lies beyond in her future. The device makes the story difficult, at first, to follow, though not to feel. By the second reading I had at least partly caught on, at least enough to grasp the rightness of the device for portraying both the way time exists in an aging mind, and also the associative processes of memory, as they well up in the narrator's mind.

Still, the import of the story itself remained unclear to me, particularly because there was another element—the planting and then uprooting of a lawn of zoysia grass which had turned out to be ugly, lethal to all other forms of plant and possibly animal life, and virtually ineradicable. The narrator and her husband finally excavate to a depth of 4 feet to try to get rid of it and even so. . . . But what did this zoysia grass have to do with the narrator and Maddy, her devotion to her husband, an unsuccessful scholar, her succession of ever more unpleasant residences after her husband's death? So I read it a third time, moved no less than before, but also still left searching for the elusive meaning in the story's controlling metaphor. I turned it this way and that—the inexorable ravages of time? Far too simple and banal. A marriage so intimate that its "root system" left the rest of Maddy's life barren? But the grass was hideous as well as rapacious and apparently permanent—so that didn't exactly check out, much less glow with significance. And after a few days more, Maddy with her snow-white hair, her faith in Matthew Arnold, the framed portrait of her husband which she took with her even on visits, all of this was still there amid the genteel squalor of a nursing home, but so was the mist of ambiguity around it. So, I finally gave up, though by the time this anthology is published. . . .

Or again, to take a different kind of perplexity. There was a story by Susan Sontag called "Unguided Tour," which is a kind of debriefing of a veteran traveler through Europe after a recent trip, which, as she remarks at the outset, was taken to say goodbye to "the beautiful things," as well as to come more to terms with her own wanderlust. It, too, is hard to follow, being told in a medley of voices—that of the woman, of a companion she left behind who also seems to double at times as an alter ego (or perhaps vice versa), and that of the man she took along to give a change of scenery to their fatigued relationship, as well as a comely young waiter she seduced, as well as the voices of curators, guides, guidebooks. Except for the last group, set off in quotes, the other voices are identified by pronouns, though only the "I" has a fixed identity and the "you's," "he's," and even "we's" require close attention. Moreover, the present conversation after the trip fades in and out of moments from the trip itself that are also often told in the present. Finally, the story is a mosaic of random remarks, impressions, memories, introspections, as well as external details: "Mornings of departure. With everything prepared. Sun rising over the most majestic of bays (Naples, Rio, or Hong Kong). . . ." "That's the prison where they torture political suspects. Terror incognita." And so forth. The tone is grounded in ennui but fans out across a full range of rapidly conveyed emotions from deliriums of sensual pleasure to what I take to be the note of despair on which it ends. But there was the rub for me. For after a couple of readings I could pretty well work out the patterns of implication—travel as a kind of ultimate model of the transience of life and of the world, and of the intransigences of the self, but I did not feel them with any force, which is another way of saying I couldn't grasp the force of the experience for the writer. So I went back still again, rec-

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ognizing now that the fluid, impressionistic, often monotonous flow worked precisely against the dramatizing of the material, while being perfectly in keeping with the theme, as I understood it, indeed reinforcing and charging it, style shaping content, seeding meaning—that was the risk the author had taken to guarantee the narrative's integrity. I could admire that but still the lack of any developing, complicating, resisting emotion of loss made the work seem psychologically unsigned, brilliant pithy writing that hadn't managed to deliver the poignancy of its subject.

No doubt my own standpoint is beginning to emerge, so I shall try to fill it out more explicitly. I shall draw heavily on Walter Benjamin, who is both a mentor and an adversary, and perhaps even more important to me in the latter role. He is also quite arbitrary at times and enigmatic at others, so bear with me. □

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Is Anybody Home?

MICHAEL MEWSHAW

Last May as I was packing my bags and preparing to leave America for the sixth time in eight years, I chanced to read an article by Edward Hoagland, "Do Writers Stay Home?" (*New York Times Book Review*, May 23, 1977), which gave me a moment's pause. Having just returned from Africa where he encountered few Americans and no writers, Hoagland decided that writers, especially young ones, do, indeed, stay home these days and he wondered what this signified. Was the nation's literature, like its politics, subsiding into isolationism? Had the ambiguities and agonies of the war in Vietnam left American authors limp and introspective? Shying away from larger responsibilities, ignoring the world outside, were they now self-absorbed, interested only in campaign reports from the sexual revolution? Whatever the answers, Hoagland clearly believed he had spotted a dangerous trend.

To be sure, the article caused me a measure of concern. Africa is, after all, a rather large piece of real estate, and I could not understand why Hoagland concluded he had the place to himself just because he had the good fortune not to bump into any other authors. Even if he didn't meet them, he should have known he wasn't the only writer on the road. Seldom a month goes by that some magazine doesn't run an article on Africa, the Middle East, Asia or South America, and there has been no dearth of books from Americans about out-of-the-way places. At the time Hoagland was in the Sudan, for instance, William Harrison was in Kenya completing his excellent novel, *Africana*, Eugene Linden had just published *The Alms Race*, an analysis of voluntary relief agencies in Lesotho, and Thurston Clarke was in Mali doing research for *The Last Caravan*, a definitive study of the 1973 drought in the Sahel.

I was also puzzled by Hoagland's short memory. Eighteen months earlier I had met him several times in Rome. On assignment for *Harper's*, he was headed for Israel, Egypt and East Africa, and having never been to that part of the world before, he had stopped in London to see Paul Theroux and get names and addresses in East Africa. From me he got names and addresses in Egypt and Israel.

While we were both marking time until we departed—he for Cairo, I for Algeria—we kept running into other writers. Robert Penn Warren was in Italy finishing *A Place to Come To*, Norman Mailer was there doing a film-script for Sergi Leone, and Donald Stewart, Robert Katz and Gore Vidal, having lived in Rome for years, seemed to vie with one another in offering hospitality to junketing authors. It was a great surprise then when I heard Hoagland claim American writers were staying home.

The magnitude of this surprise expanded exponentially when I returned to Europe this past year. Settling first in a small French village, I found myself surrounded by writers. In a neighboring hamlet William Wiser was finishing his novel, *The Wolf Is Not Native to the South of France*, while in Cannes Harold Robbins was working diligently at his dictaphone, unspooling yet another best seller. Gloria Emerson arrived to interview Graham Greene for *Rolling Stone*, and Douglas Day, whose biography of Malcolm Lowry won a National Book Award and whose novel, *Journey of the Wolf*, was set in Spain, passed through on his return from Madrid where he had been covering the first elections since the Civil War.

Michael Mewshaw has written novels set in Mexico, Los Angeles, Morocco and Texas. His new novel, to be published next year, is set in the Sahel area of Africa.

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In autumn, when I moved to Rome, the city was filled with American writers. William Murray was there to do an article for *The New Yorker* on the political situation. John Updike showed up for the Italian publication of *Marry Me*. Mary Lee Settle was in Umbria doing research for a new novel. (Her previous novel, *Blood Tie*, set in southern Turkey, has just won the National Book Award.) *Prix de Rome*-winning poet Daniel Epstein had taken up residence at the American Academy, but was on the road almost as often as he was in Rome. On a long trip through Africa, Epstein found he was following in the footsteps of another poet, Michael Harper, who had been arrested during a disturbance in Soweto. Then when Epstein returned to the American Academy, he discovered Peter Viereck had just left, that Anne Waldman, on her way to India, was in town for a few days, and that Kenneth Koch had settled in for a semester of teaching Italian junior high school students how to write poetry.

From listening to the literary grapevine, I knew James Merrill was in Athens, Philip Roth had been behind the iron curtain again, Paul Bowles and John Hopkins were, as usual, in Tangiers, William Humphrey had stopped in Paris, then went on to Scotland, and Ronald Sukenick had been in Montpellier, France, lecturing about the plight of the American writer. Having now given virtually the same lecture myself at three Italian universities, I have almost decided that the plight of the American writer is not that he has become a fretful, self-absorbed stay-at-home but rather that he is obsessed with seeing other countries and with the romantic idea that mere motion is a road to knowledge, a valid mode of perception, a smooth avenue to self-realization. Safer than heroin—although often just as expensive—travel is the contemporary artist's way of systematically deranging his senses. If Rimbaud were alive today, he would probably apply for an American Express Gold Card, wangle an assignment from a magazine, and set off to cover the war in the Horn of Africa.

More seriously, I believe American literature has little reason to fear that it is becoming too isolated and solipsistic, as Edward Hoagland seems to think, or that it is being damaged by foreign influences and frenetic travel, as I have jokingly suggested. The country is big enough, its culture diverse enough, to accommodate the broadest range of styles, interests and sensibilities. While it is true that writers as different as Emily Dickinson and William Faulkner have demonstrated the advantages of staying close to home, it is also true that Herman Melville, Ernest Hemingway, Ezra Pound, Gore Vidal and dozens of others have proved it doesn't necessarily hurt a novelist or poet to get around a little. If Walt Whitman gave good advice when he urged American writers to understand and appreciate their native ground, Henry James was no less wise when he showed that in some cases the best way to understand America—and oneself—is to leave it, at least for a while.

Of all the motives for taking off, perhaps too much has been made of those lofty goals of mastering a new language, meeting people, learning about another culture. Education is doubtless a noble aspiration, but not enough, in my opinion, has been said about the advantages of ignorance. Personally I would prefer to go places where at first I don't speak the language or know anybody, where I easily lose my direction and have no delusions that I'm in control. Feeling disoriented, even frightened, I find myself awake, alive, in ways I never would at home. All my senses suddenly alert, I can hear again, smell, see—and afterward, if I'm lucky, I can write.

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for me they are much the same; I am anxious to get to the bottom of a mystery I am constantly in the process of formulating. Although neither urge is altogether explicable, I suspect why I write has a lot in common with why I travel, just as *how* I do both might best be expressed by a line from Theodore Roethke, "I learn by going where I have to go." □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

Several weeks ago we were shown in *Blue Collar* the very seamy side of a large Detroit auto union that was not the United Auto Workers. Now, in *F.I.S.T.* we view the rise from idealism to corruption of the boss of a nationwide truckers union who is not Jimmy Hoffa. If I were disposed to see in this more than coincidence, I might cry out against an anti-union trend.

What I do see is a desire to have one's cake and eat it. The makers of such films, by concocting fictions that run parallel to fact without actually impinging on it, hang the enticement of scandal on their productions without running much risk of legal reprisal. There is nothing distinctly new about the device—gangster films of an earlier period counted heavily on it. But a difference is that unions are essential elements of our social economy, whereas gangs are entirely without redeeming virtues. (It is true that Al Capone was fiercely supportive of the American Way of Life.) I felt more indignant on this score in the case of *Blue Collar* than I do about *F.I.S.T.* because I admire the UAW and view the Teamsters with misgivings, but the principle remains the same.

These considerations aside, *F.I.S.T.* is a boisterous, brawling film that runs too long but affords a good deal of battling, verbal and physical, between the good guys and the bad guys. Johnny Kovak (Sylvester Stallone) starts life as a good guy and ends a dead guy. Stallone is a big man, impressive in wrath and sheepish in love, but it is hard to get much involved with his hero because from the start he is so evidently long on good intentions but short on brains. His idea of how to beat the company goons is to ally himself with a supplier of goons; he thinks that using his rank and file as agents for a distributor of pinball machines is a tolerable quid pro quo, and soon enough finds himself lending pension funds on no visible collateral to million-dollar Nevada casinos. Kovak is motivated by righteous rage and doomed by a refusal to believe that dirt can stick to the pants of a man as honest as he knows himself to be. He is a lot more charming than Hoffa (no great compliment) but not nearly as smart, and before the film was half over I grew weary of watching him wave his fists in the face of disaster. Stallone handles this hammy assignment with exuberant ham, but he cannot make a tragic figure out of a character that never shows qualities deeper than a pathetic bullheadedness.

The performance that interested me most was that of Rod Steiger as the chairman of a Senate rackets investigation and Kovak's nemesis. Steiger has down to perfection the studied weariness of a man long in the public eye; he speaks in that tone of frail, ironic courtesy designed to make most other men conscious that their dress is a bit vulgar and their speech ill-considered. And, as far as I can recall, his Senator Madison is the only character in the film who is not either pure white or loathsome black. Madison is clearly a public servant made indignant by malefactors, but at the moment when his

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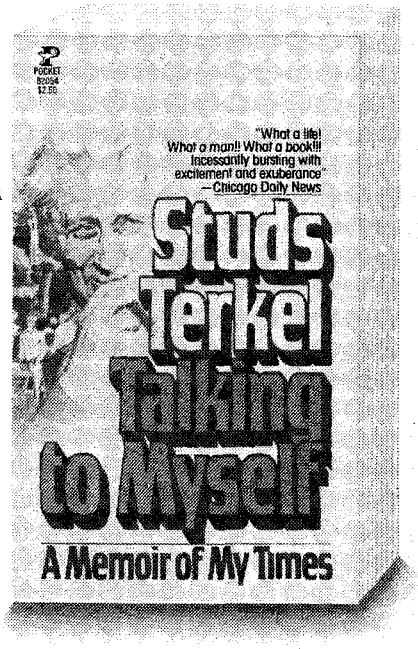
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trap closes on Kovak there flashes across his face a glint of cruel glee that catches at your breath. As much as Stallone's union boss or Tony Lo Bianco's smirking gangster, Steiger's Madison has a greed for power. I wish more of *F.I.S.T.* recognized that the spice of fiction is the discordance of character. But more than that, I hope that the film industry will now give over flirting with recent history to give a fillip to otherwise conventional movies. The preservation of deniability is a political trick the screen did not need to learn. □

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

Seeing Stephen Schwartz's new musical based on sections of Studs Terkel's book *Working* made me feel like the idle rich (46th St. Theatre). I've directed plays, taught, lectured, written, traveled, but do those activities constitute work? Since I have enjoyed doing them all, I confess to never having worked a day in my life!

The people we hear speaking and singing about their jobs in this show are engaged in *labor*. Only in special cases do they express any pride in their tasks or find any genuine satisfaction in performing them. Their sense of the utility —apart from the necessity—of what they are hired to do is more rationalization than conviction. The society that will enable its laboring class to believe that their labors serve some worthy end, thus lending to their efforts a degree of nobility, will be a happy one.

My speaking of guilt in regard to the folk we meet in *Working* refers more to my own sense of guilt in relation to them than to the show's particular mood, which is tender and touching even in its humors. These qualities are imparted to it by Studs Terkel's talent. He has a gift for eliciting from the people interviewed living, honest speech about what they think of themselves, how they look at the specific environment in which they find themselves. Simple human sentiments are evoked without preachment or strain.

Coolly viewed, my sense of guilt is altogether irrational, but I'm nonetheless glad to suffer it. For it brings me closer to individuals on whose work I depend and yet hardly know with any intimacy. It warms me to realize that, despite all that separates us, I am their kin. For if I am not, I should be a sorry thing, an isolated being.

It is easy to recognize the show's shortcomings as entertainment, but mere "entertainment" bores me. What I chiefly seek in the theatre is the possibility of enhancement through greater understanding and further intensity in regard to the pleasure I reap in the course of my ordinary contacts.

I shall not dwell on the fact that I found very few of the show's songs—written by a bevy of gifted composers—musically gratifying or memorable. There's not much music in the air nowadays—so there is very little on our stage. These tunes are valiant attempts to find lyric employment for Terkel's findings. The best parts of the occasion are to be found in the prose declarations.

The 46th St. Theatre is somewhat too large for the statements made, though David Mitchell's settings and many of the effects, along with Marjorie Slaiman's costumes, are handsomely adjusted to the show's scenic problems. One recognizes the risks (especially for the big Broadway audience) which the authors have taken and one must commend their courage. None of the evening's defects weigh much against the value of the steelworker, the parking lot attendant, the housewife, the model, the call girl, the newsboy, the gas meter reader, the supermarket checker, the hospital aide, the waitress, the fireman and the others who speak for themselves. There is no condescension here. I was a little puzzled and disappointed that there was so little protest (there is also a certain pathos in this) and I regretted only slightly that I heard so little of the aches or personal compensations in the work of publicists, journalists, college professors or the artists in chains.

The cast is excellent. I became enamored of some of the women as well as a child participant, and I liked the men too.

Apart from *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Working* "reached" me more than any of the other of this season's musicals.

Guilt assailed me again at *The Biko Inquest* (Theatre Four: 424 W. 55th St.). It is "based on transcripts of the inquest into the death of Stephen Bantu Biko held in Pretoria, South Africa from November 14 to December 2, 1977."

Biko was a rebellious black who died as a result of injuries sustained under police interrogation in apartheid land. Though the advocate for the Biko family (admirably played by Fritz Weaver) makes an airtight case implicating the police in deliberate brutality against the prisoner, the Chief Magistrate rules to the contrary with the serene effrontery typical of all tyranny dominated by the prejudice which arises from fear.

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Again I ask myself, why I should feel any guilt in this matter. I am in no way responsible for the situation in South Africa and there is probably nothing I can do about it. Yet I do feel guilt, and I believe it a good thing that I do, good at least for my moral health. Still more, if my guilt were multiplied a hundred thousandfold something might happen, there would be an alteration and an alleviation of the crime and, yes, let us say it, the sin.

Is this transcript or "documentary" by Messrs. Fenton and Blair who staged it a play? It is. It so rivets our attention that there is throughout complete silence in the house; it strikes home as almost no printed testimony could. This might not occur were the cast less dramatically capable.

The actors wear little or no makeup: they do not attempt any strongly marked histrionics: they are facts in the flesh. Besides Fritz Weaver, whose words impress us with the quick thinking and the ready eloquence in the use of language of the South African lawyer Sidney Kentridge, there are utterly persuasive impersonations by Martin Shakar, Carl Low, Philip Bosco, Jess Osuna, John Vennema. In fact everybody is exactly right. □

DANCE

NANCY GOLDNER

David Gordon used to be the cutup of the improvisation group, Grand Union. When the others were turning sour or getting stuck in some dead-end gag—or lance (sometimes it was hard to tell the difference)—it was always David (first ames only with the Grand Union) who ame up with a cute distraction. If his loys didn't work, his boyish voice and nanner were imparting good cheer. It vas no small thing to impart. In his atest venture, performed by what he alls the David Gordon/Pick Up Co., a ape of his voice instructed us not to be lisarmed by his boyishness. At heart, he tape said in its charmingly boyish oice, he was an egomaniac like all the ther choreographers. He had created a olo for himself and, although he was ware of the incongruity and injustice f inserting a solo into a group endeavor, e was going to do it. Then he shyly tepped forward and with a flicker of a mile announced in live (modest) voice hat he was now going to do his solo. s the tape had told us they would, the ther four dancers commented on his olo; this was to let them participate in the dance and was a way out of the political bind. They proceeded to comment. "Isn't it interesting that he begins without beginning?" "Do you think it's possible that he doesn't know what's on his mind?" "I don't." "You don't what?" "Mind." "Aren't his rhythms . . . primitive?" "Why yes, they're universal." "Why aren't his sneakers a darker blue, to match his trousers?"

David's solo really wasn't any more harebrained than a lot of other solos one sees, but it was a fitting excuse for the group to hit on just about everything that needs to be said about perambulations of this sort and about the people who find cause to comment on them. Gordon casts a deliciously skeptical eye on the avant-garde 1960s tradition in which he worked, and the deadpanned intonations with which he and the group speak and move add humorous irony. Nevertheless, he is still bound by those traditions, so much so that the tie undercuts his skepticism as much as the group commentary undercut his solo. The flatness of speech and movement is affected enough to inform us that the performers know they're performers, even though they're pretending not to be. Fine.

But after fifteen years of use, flatness is stale as a theatrical device. Much of the concert was concerned with blurring the distinctions between stage life and real life. As a plot device, this too has been wrung dry. As the dancers were moving about they would repeat phrases from rehearsal: "Oh, I went wrong"; "let's go back to the beginning." The dance began with a taped voice listing all the accidents that can befall performers; many of them were enacted as the dance progressed. In one sequence, David and Valda Setterfield read from a script pasted on the wall, its dialogue and accompanying action containing a built-in dead-end that sent them right back to the top line. The cleverness with which backstage hassles and front-stage drama, preparation and execution, commentary and commentary on commentary were fused puts Gordon and company notches above other would-be wits; in fact, Gordon often *is* witty. Yet the preoccupation with real/unreal as the subject for a dance seems to be the crucial dead end. And that was an item nobody commented on, in words or in motion.

When David did his uncharming solo he was still being charming. Nobody commented on that either. I find this omission strange, for David's charm is still the basic component of his choreography. Although the disintegration of the Grand Union has not freed Gordon from 1960s themes or structures, performing

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under his own aegis has given him a wider field in which to exercise his personality. He no longer has to be typecast as Peck's bad boy. His self-knowing naiveté and seemingly spontaneous acuity of timing have a freshness they could not have when they were reactive. Performing on his own also permits him to join with Valda Setterfield, who can reveal here as she could not when dancing with the Merce Cunningham Company a talent for whimsy as sure-footed as Gordon's. With the severe-looking Setterfield playing headmistress to burly Gordon, and then in a flash outwitting him with a well-placed pause and outcharming him with a smile, they are the Hepburn-Tracy team of dance. The dance was called *Not Necessarily Recognizable Objectives*. The title could well apply to the daffy script they followed, and well be the cause of their problem with it. Some of the other objectives in the dance were equally not recognizable and equally daffy, but the *modus operandi* was certainly all too recognizable and, frankly, pooped out.

Gordon and Setterfield are two of the many stellar personalities of the Judson Church scene who performed in James Waring's productions during the 1960s. If that iconoclastic and violently rebellious movement, headquartered at the Judson, could be said to have had a den mother, James Waring was it. Anyone who was anybody participated in his dances. They would be performed a few times, some of them were taken along by soloists who found jobs and security in other cities, and many of them died. Waring himself died in 1975 at the age of 53, leaving behind an enormous body of work scattered about in the minds of devoted friends. Many of them are determined to keep Waring's work alive. A few months ago the Joyce Trisler Dance Company presented his rendition of *The Phantom of the Opera*. For two weekends in late April a virtual Waring festival took place at the Judson. This activity is no doubt triggered by personal loyalty and just might be in canny response to the growing interest in what is called our "dance heritage." The Judson Church movement has barely been laid to rest, but in this age of instant history it already has a mellow aroma and Waring is already pantheonized its elder statesman.

The first Waring program consisted of group works to the music of Joplin, Mozart, Stravinsky, Joseph Lanner and some popular songs written between c. 1840 (Gottschalk) and 1926 (J.P. Johnson). The second program was solos, to Beethoven (the *32 Variations in C Minor* and first movement of the *Moonlight Sonata*), Debussy, Christian Wolff and Satie. Waring's romp through musical literature is a measure of the open-mindedness that probably enabled him to work with all the eccentrics of the Judson era. That attitude was also the nicest part of the current concerts. Behind it was a bunch of dances smelling, I'm afraid, like wilted roses.

In a sense wilted roses are the subject of Waring's dances—the vaudeville entertainers who aren't quite as dazzling as their costumes and smiles, the astounding trapeze artist with dainty feet and sensitive heart (based on Barbette, the female impersonator), a forlorn snowflake, the would-be ballerina, or simply a dancer of small, simple amplitude, fluttering her fingers and shoulders, floating to one side of the stage and across to the other. As with Gordon and all products of the Judson school, the tone is ironic and the way you get the tone is by flattening: the ironing-board technique. Gordon flattens the voice and body's natural inflections. Waring flattened out the music; he had the most literal-minded ear I've ever encountered. Those who find his dances amusing or witty or knowing (or however it is you describe the bittersweet weariness of the *boulevardier*) will point to that literalness as the key to Waring, just as they might ascribe his parodic-affectionate investigation of style to the flat relief in which he presents trademarks of style. They are right. It's just a question of whether the calculated deflation develops into an inversion of itself in performance or whether it sticks to its face value. To this viewer, who has seen little Waring and was out of town during the Judson's most flourishing days, Waring's laconic doodlings feel like laconic doodlings. I enjoyed it when a bashful handyman presented an ineptly vigorous cancan dancer with a flower pot filled with asparagus, although it was not so much the timing of the presentation as the prop itself that caused amusement. I even think that *32 Variations in C Minor*, performed by the excellent Ze'eva Cohen, is an exciting solo, exciting for its duplications of heroic gesture and exciting in the way it imitates everything in Beethoven, including the variety and robustness. As for the rest of it, I could not distinguish between the wilt of the steps and dancers and Waring's wilted comments on them. □

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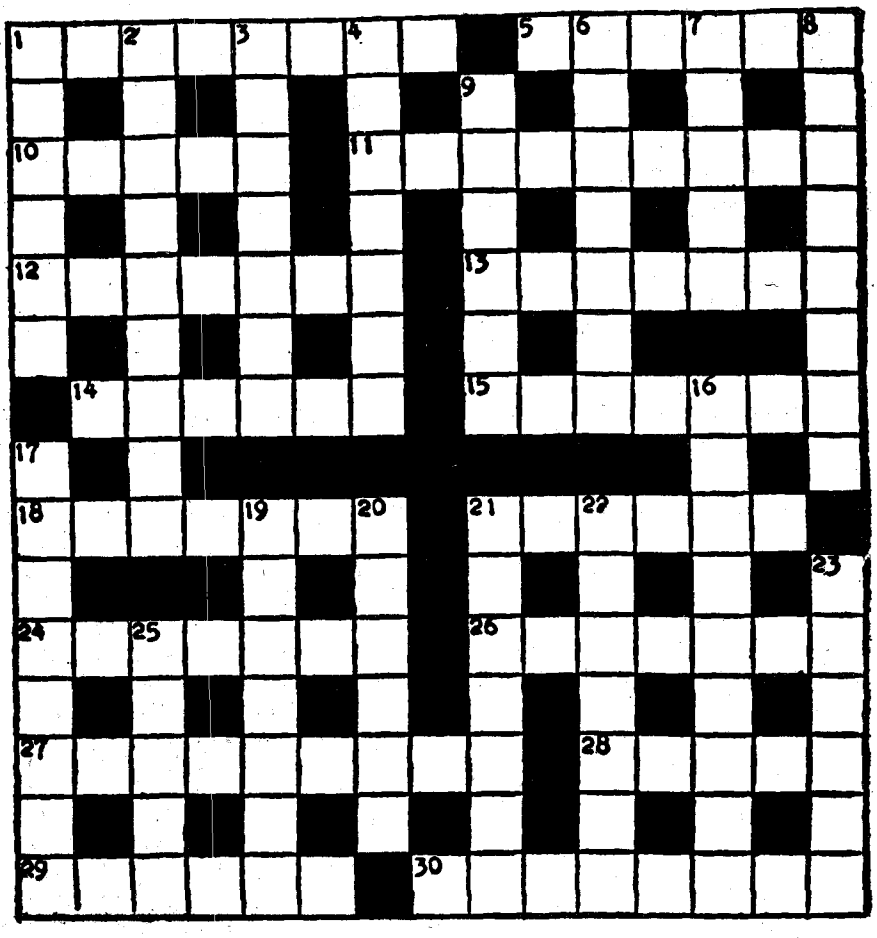
Crossword Puzzle No. 1729

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and 5 Choose what burns for light reading material—a novel solution. (8,6)
10 and 15 Several possibilities to change the local people. (12)
11 If you're forgetful, in part, they should be in position to help you. (9)
12 There's many an opening called for in his line of work. (7)
13 Talking of a baby, it's a rather quiet toy. (7)
14 Sparing this, a waterproof rug always shows it. (6)
15 See 10 across
18 A more than 20 sort of head covering. (7)
21 Do they play back? Quite the reverse! (6)
24 An unusual sort, with spirit to make a place for the speaker. (7)
26 But they must be able to keep secrets in the bank! (7)
27 One might into Ascot, but they go from one side to another. (9)
28 Permission to go? (5)
29 and 20 Not an unusual concern in something, but concerned people share it. (6,8)

DOWN

1 Sort of display all but the head in cloths worn over the shoulder. (6)
2 Make an incision and operate—that's the way to go! (3,3,3)
3 and 4 Evidently no one is unemployed in D.C.—business may require it. (7,7)
6 Where a snake comes to a stop on the road? (7)
7 Level and square, perhaps, for the occasion. (5)
8 Mystery stories are not necessarily kept in such a file. (8)
9 A little firm on top of what might entitle the holder to something. (6)
16 How 27 might make a reverse? (Features go the opposite way.) (5-4)
17 A price to set for certain performances so described? (8)
19 Things like 1-5 might be enhanced, if so bound. (7)
20 Your uncle might have a thing to cook with, made with oriental craft . . . . (6)
21 . . . . making it a strain for the craftsman. (7)
22 Lie upset in a storm of the sea. (7)
23 The appearance to the mind of verb inflection in some languages. (6)
25 After a fashion, play 24 with no returning alternative. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1728

ACROSS: 1 and 6 Calculated risk; 10 Muffled; 11 Gradual; 12 Signpost; 13 Priam; 15 Ought; 17 Eyes right; 19 Haphazard; 21 Spear; 23 Podia; 24 Corrodes; 27 Isolate; 28 Iceberg; 29 and 30 Take for granted. DOWN: 1 and 14 Come to the point; 2 Lofting; 3 Uhlan; 4 Andromeda; 5 Eight; 7 Inuring; 8 Kilometers; 9 Ramparts; 16 Tear away; 18 Endorsing; 20 Paddock; 22 Everest; 24 Credo; 25 Opera; 26 Aged.

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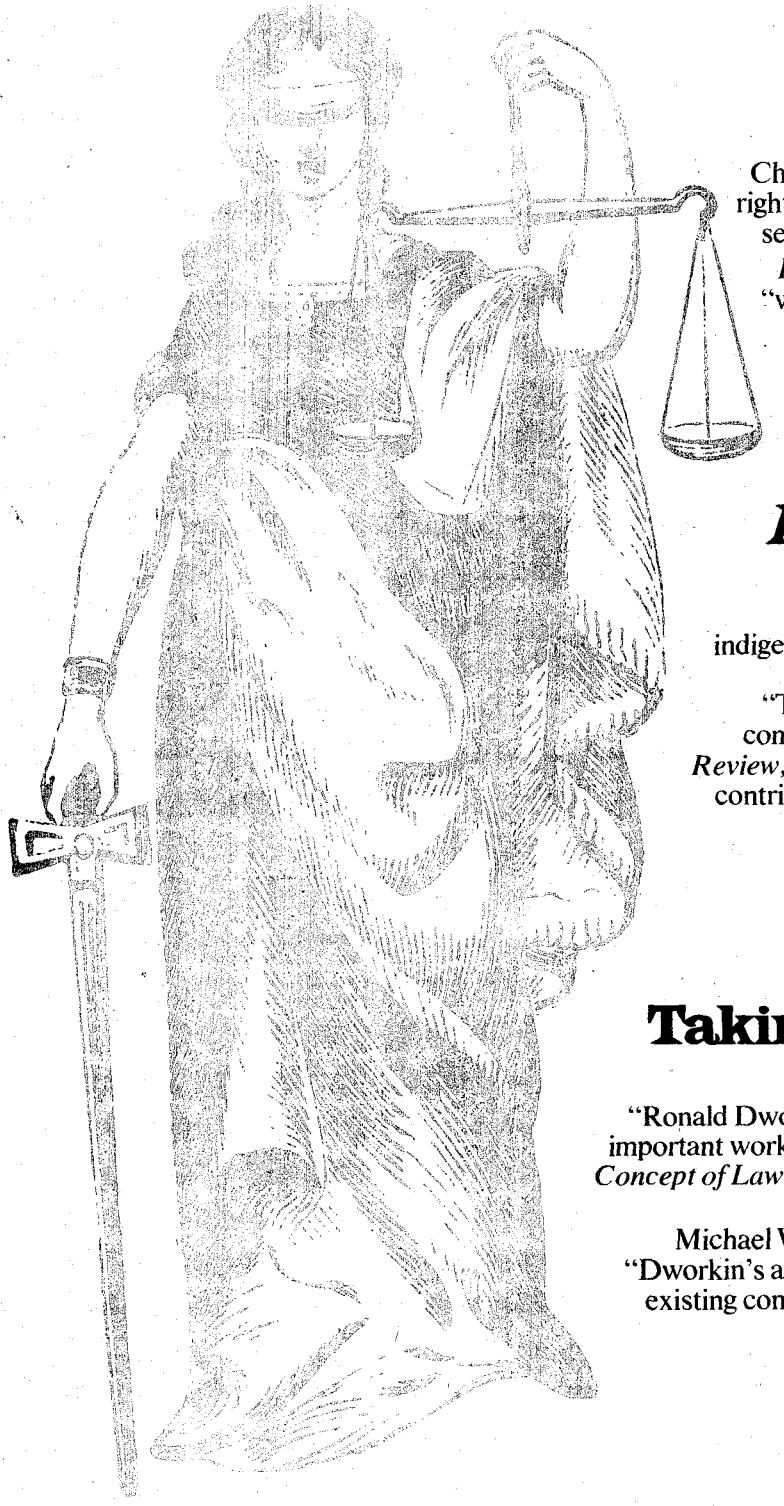
JUST BOOKS



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